THE FOLLOWING OF CHRIST.

Written in Latine by

THOMAS OF KEMPIS,

Canon Regular of the Order of S. Auguſtine, of the mount of S. Agnes.

REVIEVVED AND IN diuers things corrected.

By M. C. Confeſſor to the English Nuns at Paris.

Who alſo added the ſaid Thomas his life.

And in this ſecond Edition more amply proued him to be the vndoubted Author of this booke.

AT PARIS,
By M. BLAGEART, Anno 16[illegible].

BODLEIAN
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27 OCT 1953
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TO THE VERIE

VENERABLE,

His much honored good Lady

MARIE TREDWAY,

FIRST ABBESSE,

OF THE ENGLISH NVN-nery of S Auguſtin's Order, in Paris.

And to all the

RELIGIOVS DAMES,

her pious and obedient daughters.

VNder your names and in your fauour, I did, as you know, in the yeare 1636.

reprint *the Following of Christ*, aſcribing the worke, to your brother Thomas of Kempis, as I thought the true authour of it, following therin the greater number of beſt Authours. But as it should ſeeme it pleaſed not all to leaue you lõg in the peaceable poſſeſſion of this iewell. For in the yeare 1640. there appeared printed at Paris a preface bearing this vncouth frontiſpice. *The Following of Chriſt, written in Latine by Iohn Gerſen Abbot of Vercelles, falſely heretofore aſcribed by ſome to I. Gerſon, by others to Thomas of* Kempis *reſtored in this* English *tranſ-*

lation to his true Authour. A worke worthy labour; to diſcouer falſitie, and iuſtly to make reſtitution, or to render euery one his owne: which you obſerue by the title, appeares to be his end, and he the rather, as he ſaith, complyed with it, *That the au hours life and profeſſion might be knowne to haue bene ſutable to his words.* But as his end was good, ſo, me thinkes, he should haue made vſe of ſome good meanes too, that ſo his worke might haue bene good. Wheras contrarily as I am certainly informed (and indeed the forme of this preface is fitted to it)

his intention was to haue bought vp what was left of my impreſſion in England, and pulling out your brothers and your names, to haue ſtolen a ſtranger into your poſſeſſion. How beit though his manner may ſeeme not faire, yet his meaning was not to keepe what is yours, without warranting his deed by vnanſwearable and euidently conuinceing teſtimonies, as he tearmes them, which truly ſeeme to me coniectures and ſurmiſes rather then euident proofes: as I hope I ſhall make appeare to you and all impartiall readers. Nor ſhall it coſt

me'any more labour, thẽ an explication of what I then ſaid, with ſome addition; and an application of the ſame reaſons to the oppoſitions which he formes in the forenamed preface.

And firſt I aduiſed you rather to vſe preſcription againſt ſuch as should endeuour to father the worke *vpon ſome other Authour, thẽ proces*, meaning therby that you should rather imploy your tyme in treaſuring vp the ſpirituall riches which the Authour plentifully affords to all that read him, then in intertayning any ſuch fruitleſſe and

needleſſe diſpute, your poſſeſſion being ſo cleare, as I did then, and doe yet eſteeme it to be, (which the inſuing editions will make good to any reaſonable man) as that you needed no other defence then that rule of the law *We poſſeſſe because we poſſeſſe.*

THE 1. EDITION.

ANNO DOMINI.

M.CCCC.LXXXVI.

This Ed. was ether of the yeare 1486. ore els before that tyme, as may be ſeene in Auſbourg librarie where that old booke is kept, and vpon the firſt leafe of it is written. *This booke was*

bought of Aushourg Conuent of the order of brother Carmelites.

EDITION II.

M.CCCC.LXXXIX.

Printed at Lions, wherof one booke is kept in the Librarie of that ancient ad Learned Sorbone The later of the two editions being within 18. yeares after the Authours death.

EDITION III.

M. CCCC. LXXXXIV.

At Norimberg, aswill appeare by one of that Edition kept at the Religious Abbay of S. Genoueife in Paris.

EDITION IV.

M. CCCCC. XIX.

At Anwerpe.

EDITION V.

M. CCCCC. XX.

At Paris.

EDITION VI.

M.CCCCC. XXI.

At Paris.

EDITION VII.

M. CCCCC.XXIII

At Paris.

EDITION VIII.

M. CCCCC.XXXV.

At Anwerpe.

EDITION IX.

M. CCCCC. XXXV.

At Venice.

EDITION X.

M. CCCCC. XLV.

At Strasborow tranſlated into that countrie lãguage, as Conrade Geſnerus doth teſtifie.

EDITION XI.

M. CCCCC. LXIII.

At Baſile.

EDITION XII.

M CCCCC. LXXIV.

At Anwerpe.

EDITION XIII.

M. CCCCC. LXXV.

At Anwerpe.

EDITION XIV.

M. CCCCC. LXXXVII

At Anwerpe in Spaniſh trãſlated by Granado where though the Author be not named yet in the end of the Prologue it is made cleare. *Es bien que ſepas que quiẽ hizo eſte libro no es Perſon come haſta aqui ſe intitulaua, mas fray Thomas a Kempis Canonigo Regular de S. Aug.*

EDITION XV.

M. DC.

At Anwerpe.

EDITION XVI.

M. DC. V.

At Anwerpe.

EDITION. XVII.

M. DC. VII.

At Anwerpe.

EDITION XVIII.

M. DC. X.

At Colton.

To say nothing of the innumerable editions of almost all places; euen to this day.

Secondly I aduised you. To let Thomas of Kempis his own word gaine credit with you, written with his owne hand in octauo, bound vp amongst his

other workes as it is to be seene in the originall Manuscript in S. Martins Monasterie at Louaine, which Vlimmerius ancient Prior testifieth to haue receaued of their brothers of S. Agneses, many yeares agoe, who affirmed that it was not onely written by Thomas of Kempis his hand, but also composed by him, as they haue it deliuered by the continuall tradition of their brethren. so Bollandus.

1. *Addition*: Add to this another originall Manuscript in decimo sexto belonging to the Religious of S. Agneses, and is now kept at the Iesuites of Anwerpe, of the verie same

hand writing with that of S. Martins of Louaine, and vseing the selfe same abbreuiations written Anno 1441.

2. *Add.* There are two Manuscript catalogues bound vp together and kept in the Monasterie of Canon Regulars of of the vallie of S. Martins, written in the yeare, 1472 (one yeare onely after Thomas his discease) wherin mention is made of Thomas of Kempis his bookes, amongst the rest of those of the Following of Christ.

3. *Add* In the same Monasterie there is yet another booke containing, *hortulus rosarum*, together with the 1. 4. and third booke of the Following of Christ: in the end wherof is written iu the same hand, here ends, the foure treatises of Thomas of Kempis a deuoute

and recollected man written limmed and bound by the hād of brother Simon Iames de Leydis, profeſſed in Leydendorp, fellow, for the tyme, to the Gouernour of the ancient Monaſterie of Nuns in Amſtelrodam 1482.) *onely 11. yeares after Thomas his death.*

4. *Add.* There is yet another booke in the ſame Monaſterie, with this title. In this booke are contayned the inſuing ſmale workes of Thomas of Kempis, amongſt which one is thus ſpecified. *Here begins the firſt booke of Thomas of Kempis Canon Regular of the Following of Chriſt, and of the contempt of all the vanities of the world.* 1524. (to witt 53. yeares after Thomas his death.)

5. *Add* Iohn Haſius Prouinciall of the Societie of Ieſus in Germanie, witneſſeth by his

letters, that he had found many bookes of the Following of Christ, especially amongst Canon Regulars, which were written in Thomas his life tyme, and beare his name, as Authour, such saith he I found some yeares since at Confluēce in our Colledge, which came thither from some ruinated Regulars. Thus Bollandus.

Thirdly I aduised that Iohn Buschius should confirme you, who liued in the same age, and place (being but a myle distant) being also of the same order and congregation, to witt of windeseme, and familiar friends. He wrote in the yeare 1464. 7. yeares before Thomas dyed, being thē a professed Reli-

Religious (of S. Agneſes, a myle only diſtãt frõ Windeſeme) of 57. yeares ſtanding. What doubt ought to be made of this authours credit ſpeaking of a matter of ſo litle ſecrecie, and difficultie, as the compoſing of a booke, at ſo ſmale a diſtance, and after ſo long acquaintance, and where, if there had bene any doubt to be made, he might in one halfe houres ſpace haue bene ſatisfyed to the cõtrarie by the Authour himſelf.

Nothing is or can be ſaid to his teſtimonie, but meere imaginations, ãd wrangling ſurmiſes, which ſerue for nothing in things of that

nature. Heare what he ſaith in Chro. Win. l. 2. c. 21. Fr. Tho. de Kempis &c. *qui plures deuotos libros compoſuit, videlicet qui ſequitur me de imitatione Chriſti. Br. Thomas of Kempis who cõpoſed diuers deuout bookes, to witt, who followes me of the Imitation of Chriſt, with others* : to diſproue it, you muſt bring ſome Manuſcript or ſome other edition to shew the falſitie of this: ſo ſaith S. Auguſtine (*de moribus Eccleſiæ Cath.* c. 29.) *proferendus eſt namque tibi alius codex &c. vbi ſola deſint ea quæ hic immiſſa criminaris*, you muſt produce ſome other booke of the ſame matter, where

theſe things are only wanting which you accuſe as put in here; otherwiſe you will gaine no beliefe with wiſe men.

Addit. Howbeit for your, and the readers more ſatisfaction, I will ioyne to him another witnes, that in the mouth of two &c. euery word may ſtād firme. Mamburnus then a Canon Regular of the verie ſame houſe with Thomas; and ether in the ſame tyme or at leaſt not long after (as is manifeſt by his coming into France Anno Domini 1496. to Reforme that ancient and famous Monaſterie of S. Victors, and conſequently was no nouice whē he came, and yet he had written the booke which we are about to cite long before his coming, at Canoy a Monaſterie of Cano-

neſſe Regulars of your owne order, and was then gouerned by the Religious of S Agneſes) makes no difficultie to cite him as a brother of his owne, while yet the thing was not in queſtion.

Firſt in his Dietario exercitiorum de celebratione Miſſæ, parag. 3. *Hinc monet deuotus Thomas noſter Kempis. Non ſis in celebrando minis prolixus nec feſtinus, ſed ſerua bonum cõmunem modum eorum cum quibus viuis. Hence our deuoute Thomas Kempis doth admonish. Be not too long nor too short in celebrating, but obſerue the good comon cuſtome of thoſe with whom thou doſt liue, &c.* l. 4 *de Imit.* c. 10. §. 7.

Secondly in his ſcaſa Comun. tit. 6. Alpha. 22. §. 4. *Quam doctrinam noſter Thomas* Kempis *inſecutus erat cum communicaturus dicebat, O Deus meus amor aternus, &c.* W*hich doctrine our Thomas* Kempis *followed, when about to communicate he ſaid: ô my God eternall loue, &c.* l. 4. *de Imit.* c. 17. §. 1.

Hauing now eſtabliſhed the right of your pretentiõ, not by forced proofes and coniectures, but by as faire euidences, and as abſolute demonſtrations, as the nature of ſuch a ſubiect will beare; you will giue me leaue in anſwering the reaſons of the prefacer (which

I am no further bound to doe, but by shewing they cõclud not euidently, without which our proofes ſtãd firme) to play as he doth, with coniectures.

Preface. *Iohn Gerſon to whom all the firſt and Following impreſſions, in all countries, and languages, for aboue 150. yeares had giuen it.*

Ans. Here is too many alls, to make thẽ all good: he that imbraces too much holds nothing: without ceremonie there is ſcarce one word true in all this great vndertaking, as you will ſee by the diuers editiõs already cited beginingwithin 15. yeare after the authors

death, and continuing till this day.

Preface. *That the true Author* was *Iohn Gerſen appeares by an old Latine Manuſcript kept at Rome &c. tyme out of mind; with this inſcription and ſubſcription: here begins the firſt booke of Iohn Gerſen of the imitation of Chriſt. Here ends the fourth booke of Iohn Gerſen of the Sacrament of the Altar.*

2. *By another Latine Manuſcript kept in the Library of the late Cardinall of Biſcia, with this title Inciput &c. in Eng: here begins the Treatiſe of Iohn of Cauaglia of the Imitation of Chriſt and contempt of all worldly vanities; and it is*

diuided into foure bookes.

3. *By a third Manuſcript written in old characters vpõ parchement and to be ſeene in the Nouitiate of the Ieſuites at Aron &c. with theſe remarkable inſcriptions before euery booke and ſubſcription in the end. Incipiunt, &c.* Engliſhed. Here begins the Chapters of the firſt booke of the Abbot Iohn Gerſen. Here begins the table of the ſecond booke of Iohn Gerſen Abbot; Here begins the table of the third booke of the Abbot Iohn Gerſen; Here begins the Chapters of the fourth booke of the Abbot Iohn Gerſen. Here ends the 4.

and laſt booke of the Sacrament of the Altar by Iohn Gerſen Abbot.

Anſwer. If I should anſwer the Prefacers expectation, I should not indeed anſwer at all: becauſe theſe, if we would beleeue him, are his vnanſwerable teſtimonies. But in truth my greateſt difficultie is to find out his. For if he thinke to ſtope our mouthes with naming his Gerſen halfe a ſcore a tymes, he miſſes his marke: and beggs the queſtion. We haue made a ſhift to gett our Thomas named as often vpon the matter in the Manuſcripts foremencioned, and yet nether is

it granted, nether would we assume it as proued, had we produced no better cards for it. We inculcate to you and proue *our ancient and continuall possession, and produce irreprochable witnesses.* You must produce, then, to conuince vs, not Manuscripts onely, in which we will rather take your word then take the paynes to goe see them, but Manuscripts of aboue 230. yeares old, that so they might haue bene preceedēt to our Thomas. Our demāds are nether vnpossible nor vnreasonable. Not vnreasonable as we often say, for reason giues the possess.

for to be the owner, vnleſſe euidence conuince the cõtrarie. Not impoſſible: for you might make the matter manifeſt by the date of the tyme in which they were written: for hardly is it credible, that amongſt ſuch exactnes of *ſubſcriptiõs* and *inſcriptions*, the date of the tyme alſo should not be obſerued. If you intend to inferre this *by tyme out of mind*, leſſe then two hundred yeares will ſerue for that, as you know well: or els by *old characteres, and vpon parchement*. S. Victors Librarie can shew vs bookes which foyles the intended concluſion: for

they may ſeeme old and be vpon parchement too, and yet not exceede 230. yeares old for all that. But I know that the R. Fa. Francis Walgraue, who tooke the paynes to putt theſe verie ſame reaſons in Latine, could helpe this Inglish Preface with a preſumptiō, which he putts in his Latine, to witt the iudgemēt of Antiquaries, but we will take tyme to anſwere them when he names thē: and he will pleaſe in the interim to remēber, that they are proofes we require and he is lyable to giue, not preſumptions.

Now let vs obſerue in

paſſing how well theſe vn-anſwerable teſtimonies hãg together, and how faithfully they are putt downe?

Abbot Caietane the firſt mouer of this doubt in his putt out at Paris 1616. almoſt the firſt yeare that euer it was moued in print, at leaſt for Gerſen, deliuers that teſtimonie of Aron Manuſcript thus. *Geſſen, Geſen, Geſen, Geſſen, Gerſen.* Father Fr. Walg. in his 1638 *Geſen, Geſen, Geſen, Geſen, Gerſen.* Our Eng. Preface. *Gerſen, Gerſen, Gerſen, Gerſen, Gerſen.*

So that as though euery thing that liked vs were lawfull. Firſt *Geſſen, Geſen*

Gerſen, were indifferēt with them. Then they brought them to *Geſſen and Gerſen*, onely; and now at laſt they haue gott all the three to *Gerſen*. The child is at length named. Yet Abbot Caietanes booke in the title page is *Geſſen*, and F. Francis *Gerſen* becauſe that laſt might haue bene more eaſily confounded with *Gerſon*: ād therfor it pleaſes him more, it should ſeeme: and ſo indeed it doth me alſo; for it begins to open the begining of the miſtake, which ſurely (*diuinare licet quoniam tibi*) was no other then by taken an (*o*) to be an (*e*) wherin one

might be easily ouer seene in those old characters.

But here withall you will giue the reader leaue to note, that nether the Copiist; Abbot *Caietane*, F. *Francis* Wal. nor the *Eng Prefacer*, haue bene verie faithfull or precise in their citations, especially the whole busines depending vpon a letter onely.

For let them but leaue vs the same libertie to change *e* into *o* (which is more obuious) that they take to change (R R^s. and S S^s.) or to leaue them quite out at their pleasure, ãd we shall easily find, that all their Manuscripts were

in Gerſons name, and ſo ſerue them for nothing.

Preface. *A fourth printed at Venice in the yeare* 1501. *vnder the name of Iohn Gerſon the Chancelour of Paris, was found in the Monaſterie of S. Catharine of Genua with this ſubſcription in an ancient character almoſt worne out. Hunc &c. This booke was not made by Iohn Gerſon, but by Iohn Lord Abbot of Vercelles, as it is to beſeene this day in the ſaid Abbay, written with his owne hand.*

Anſwere. Note how all is putt to profitt. The ſpeech was of Manuſcripts and loe we are fallen vpon a printed copie in Gerſons

name

name too and that at Venice which is no good signe what of all this? oh it is the *superscription*, that must doe the deed. That sayes it was not Gerson. But who wrote it? there the Prefacer leaues vs to arreed. But F. Francis holds him for *some louer of truth*. Marrie who he was, nether doth he expresse, nor I know: onely this I know, while he sayes so, gratis, I am not bound to beleeue him. But if he would take this kind of proceeding for payement, he should soone haue full satisfaction: for doth not, *he, who euer he was, that wrote Gersons prayses before*

the first part of his opuscules, (as Abbot Caietane himselfe testifyeth) *leaue this testimonie. Other treatises are sometymes ascribed vnto him, which yet haue a certaine Authour, as is the booke of the contempt of the World, which as it is manifest was putt out by a certaine Thomas a Canon Regular.* And did not also the said Caietane obserue, that almost in all the editions, some such thing as this is found? to witt, *though Iohn Gerson be said to be the Authour of this booke, yet was it a certaine Thomas of Kempis a Canon Regular.*

cripts although written at ſeuerall tymes, and by ſeuerall perſons, and kept in ſeuerall places, agree all in this one name of the Authour; Iohn Gerſen of Canabacum Abbot of Vercelles.

Anſ. Yea verily one might more rightly obſerue that they are as diuers in opinion as place; their teſtimonies truly do not agree, vnleſſe they be crooked to your owne will and pleaſure. Doe you call that aggreement, when euery one ſpeakes after his owne mãner, no two ſaying the ſame; one tearming him *Iohn Gerſen*, without *Abbot*: another *Iohn Geſen Abbot*,

another *Iohn of Canaglia* (*Canabacũ*) which *Pignomus calls Cabelliacum*, a fourth, as the pref, *Iohn Gersõ* right downe: one, whõ yet they name not, and ſo ſtands for no body, will haue him to be *Iohn Abbot of Vercelles*. Nay ſome one is not conſequent to himſelfe, as I haue shewed, vſing *Geſſen*, *Geſen*, *Gerſen*.

Preface. *Secondly that the Authour of this treatiſe was no Germa as was Kempis, nor french man as Gerſon, &c. but an Italican, is manifeſt by ſundrie Latine words frequently borrowed from the Italian language. as*, Importat, Simplificatus, Conſcientioſus licentiatus, queruloſus.

Fontaliter, groſſe, paſſionatus, puluerisari, baſſari, contentare, ſentimenta.

Anſ. That this argument is weake and inconſequent I conceaue, euery one, who vnderſtands ether Latine or french, at the firſt ſight will iudge. For was it not verie obuious for a plaine latiniſt, (ſuch as generally all were in that age wherin Thomas wrote, and ſuch as it is manifaſt by all his other workes he was) hauing *conſcientia* to frame *cõſcientioſus*: *Licentia licẽtiatus*, *fons fontaliter*: *paſsio paſsionatus*: *Puluis puluerisso*: *contentus contento*? And are not *importe*, *ſimple*, *conſcientieux*.

licentié, quereleux, grossiere-mẽt, passionné, pulueriser, bas, content, sentiment, as common french words, without any forceing, as they can be Italian? And yet (which I must needes admire) the Authour of the Pref. makes no difficultie to alledge euen these for *manifest* proofes. What may we not doubt of in his other assertions, which are not so incident for euery one to iudge of, since in these familiar things, wherin too, he may be so easily cõuinced, he is so confident?

But I loose tyme in disputing probably, what is manifest indeed for Tho-

mas of Kēpis. For all theſe words are verie ordinarie in all his other workes which are doubted of by none. As *contentari* in the third part of his ſermons ad Nouitios ſer. 20. §. 13. and ſer. 19. partis 2. §. 17. Soliloq. animæ cap. 12. §. 10. ibid. cap 19. §. 1, De fid. Diſpen. cap. 6. Hoſp. paup. c. 4. §. 1. Vita D. Iacobi, &c. §. 4. and in many more places.

Queruloſus. Hoſp. pauperum, cap. 5. §. 2.

Paſſionatus, Serm. p, 1. §. 1. Dominica Pſal. §. 2. Vita D Floren. §. 2.

Sentimenta. Parte 2. ſerm. ad No. §. 3. De mortif.

ſuiipſius §. 6.

Licentiatis, Solil. animæ cap. 1. §. 13.

Conſcientioſus. Vita Ledew. Virg. c 11. § 1.

Regrattor. De ſol. & ſilen, 2. conſid. De mortif. ſuiipſius §. 5. Dominica in Paſſione §. 2. Enchi. Monach, c. 1. parte 3. ſerm. ad No. ſer. 20. §. 7. & ſerm. 29. §. 1.

Penſare. De Paſſ. Domini §. 23. Val. lilior. ca. 15. §. 3. Enchi. Mo. c. 5. §. 2. Parte 2. ſer. ad No. ſerm. 13. §. 4. ibid. ſer. 17. §. 1. Parte 3. ſer. 20. §. 6. ibid. §. 10. Val. lil. c. 20. §. 1.

Groſſé. De fideli Diſpenſatore. §. 1.

Baſſé, De excr. Mo-

nachorum. cap. 8.

You ſee how litle ſparing I am with you in the cotation of places, which yet might be done more abundantly, if it were not ſuperfluous and altogether needleſſe.

Pref. *Thirdly that the Authour of this booke called the Imitatiõ of Chriſt, was a Mõke of S. Benets order, is clearely cõuinced out of his owne words &c.*

An. Was he a Monke of S. Benets order then? hinc illæ lachrymæ.

Pref. *This is conuinced out of the 1.b.c.17. de Vita Monaſtica. The whole Chapter is taken out of S. Benets Rule.*

Ans. Ergo the Authour of it muſt needs be a Monke of S. Benet, is this your conuincing conſequence? or it is euen a good coniecture? Suppoſe what you ſay. Yet isit not free for any man to cite, or make vſe of an ancient Authour that liued before him?

Pref. *In the* 3. *b.c.* 10. *he giues God thankes for hauing giuen him the ſpeciall grace to take vpon him a Monaſticall life,* &c. *And in the* 56. *Suſcepi de manu tua crucem* &c. *Verè Vita boni Monachi crux eſt,* &c. *Eia fratres pergamus ſimul,* &c. *This may ſuffice to shew that the Authour by his owne confeſsion was a monke and*

had imbraced a Monasticall life.

Ans. Least I might seeme to be willing to wrangle, I will grant the Prefacer that the Author confesses himselfe to haue bene a Mõke, though it be not in tearmes in the places cited, which yet against such possession and such witnesses as we haue produced, were not too much. Therfore *it cannot aggree to the life of a Canon Regular.* I deny the consequence: for notwithstanding that I am not ignorãt, that the canon law doth distinguish Monkes from Canon Regulars: yet by which word or words, or

what circumſtance of the places alleaged, is a reaſonable man neceſſitated or induced to beleeue that the Author was any way obliged to the rigour of Canon proofe? Here was no queſtion of diſputing of priuiledges or preceedences, nether matter of fauour nor pruishmēt did interceede, wherby he was ether to vſe extention or reſtrainte: here was no prebend ether to be wonne or loſt by the proprietie or improprietie, ſtricknes or leſſe ſtricknes of ſpeech. Nay we ſee this Author (if euer any) neglect the pompe and ſplendor of words, to haue a

more eaſie acceſſe to the candor and ſimplenes of the pious ſenſe which he wholy aymes att. The Croſſe is the cõmon badge of all faithfull chriſtians, it ought not be reſtrayned to point out one order onely: It is not the life of a good Monke onely, but indifferẽtly of any good religious man or woman; of any Chriſtian: who alſo are as well brethren in Chriſt, being adoptiue ſons of God, as any Monkes are. Nay ſee euen by the paſſage it ſelfe how little the Author doth ſticke to that legall rigour. For though the title of the 17. Chap. of

the firſt booke be, *de Vita Monaſtica*, yet is the end of the firſt paragraphe of the ſame Chapter extended indifferently to all Religious, *ſi vis religioſam ducere vitã*, *if thou wilt lead a religious life*, as alſo the begining of the ſecond §. Yea and the whole ſcope of the Chapter doth equally ſuite with all religious people, without hauing one word which is proper and peculiar to Benedictins. But to be short, and to putt the who buſines out of all doubt, pleaſe onely to ſee theſe two or three places of Thomas his other workes, to witt the 2. part. ſer. 20. ãd 3.

§. of his sermõs to his owne Nouices, where he saith *Frater Monache*, brother Mõke. And at other tymes religious brothers indifferẽtly as p. 2. ser. 14. 8. §. *Religiose frater*, a litle after in the same §. *qui de bonis Monasterii quotidie viuit, & statuta Monastica tepidè seruat*, &c. And againe to the same Nouices p. 3. serm. 20. Hæc est vita sanctæ crucis, &c. hæc regula Monachorũ hęc vita bonorũ. So that we haue *brother*, *Mõke*, *Crosse*, *Monasticall life*, iust in the same sense and manner as in the Chapters aboue cited. I could cite iust 20. places more which I

haue noted: but I will omitt them since I see 20. hundred places cannot make a truth more cleare.

Pref. *At Rome in the Librarie of the said Abbot Caietane is a fift Latine copie of this booke written in old parchement &c. In the first letter of this booke which is a great Q. is represented the picture, as it seemes, of the Authour in the Benedictin habit, according to that which he saith of his monasticall life cap. 56. l. 3. suscepi de manu tua crucem.*

Ans. Is a painted letter to be produced against so faire positiue proofes as we haue alleged? certes I haue nothing to reply here

but

but *pictoribus atque Poetis quidlibet audendi ſemper fuit æqua poteſtas.*

The Painter and the Poet alwaies were
Equall *in right, what ere they liſt, to dare.*

Pref. *S Bonauenture who departed this life* 1254. *hauing taken his ſeuenth Collation, &c. out of the* 25. *Chap. of the firſt booke of this Author, cites the booke in theſe tearmes &c.* vt patet in deuoto libro de Imitatione Domini noſtri Ieſu Chriſti.

Ans. Here I muſt cõfeſſe ingenuously that if this aſſertion were made proofe, he would but make an vnhappie and mal-aduenture

that euer would aduenture to open his mouth againſt it. But you will remember that I told you, that this was ſaid, but not proued. For though this worke of his *Collations* be found amongſt diuers of his printed workes, yet is it in none of his Manuſcripts, *nether in thoſe of the Vaticane Columnia, Sforzia, Benonia, nor Tholoſe it ſelfe where it is ſaid to haue bene made; nor yet in any other Monaſterie at Rome.* Whence we haue iuſt cauſe to doubt, that as well the *Collations* as many other litle workes (in particuler your brother Kempis his *Alphabetum Monachorum*

which euery one giues him without all difficultie) are falsely fathered on him, by mistake, as it hath also happened to Saint Augustine and diuers other Fathers.

Addition. Trithemius makes no mentiō of the Collations in his Catalogue of the said S. Bonauentures workes.

Addit. There is a note intimating doubt put before the said Collations, as is to be seene in the Vaticane and Francfort Editions to witt, *vt in in impressis hactenus opusculis fertur*, *as it is hitherto reported in the imprinted opuscules*, wheras yet the Mauus. of Tolooſe, as I haue said though, euen there he was said to haue made those 8. Collations now in question. where then were they more like to be found?

Addit. Nay to vſe a poſitiue argument, it is manifeſt that the Collations were not S. Bona. ſince one Vbertine is cited in thē who wrote not till about thirtie yeares after S. Bonauenture departed this life. And yet in the end of the firſt Collation he is cited thus, *hæc Vbertinus*, which *hæc*. For any thing we haue yet bene taught, muſt be referred to ſomthing of Vbertins mentioned in the ſaid Collation. Otherwiſe that impertinencie of citing an Authour for nothing, would be argumēt enough, that learned S. Bonauenture was not the Authour of the ſaid Collations.

Pref. *S. Thomas the Angelicall D. who dyed three monthes before S. Bonauenture, in the office of the B. Sacramēt &c. takes that Antiphona at*

Mag. in the firſt Euenſong, ô quam ſuauis eſt Domine ſpiritus tuus, &c. *out of the 13. chap. of the 4. booke &c.*

Ans. No you miſtake; he tooke it out of S. Thomas. Why not? we giue as much reaſon for this, as the Preface for the contrarie. The argument is knowen to be too weake and vicious which can be retorted with the ſame facilitie, with which it is obiected.

Pref. Quantum vnuſquiſque eſt in oculis tuis, tantum eſt & non amplius: ait humilis ſanctus Franciſcus. *Which words well cõſidered, makes it more then probable that the Author of*

this booke liued, and wrote it whilſt S. Francis was yet liuing.

Ans. I pray you let vs conſider theſe words well and ſee whether we picke out the ſame concluſion. Take the paſſage in English. *How great euery one is in thy eyes, ſo great he is, and no more, ſaith the humble ſainte Francis.* Doe you find it out? It is becauſe the Author cites S. Francis *by a word of the time then preſent.*

Pref. *Becauſe he cites him for that Apothegme by a word of the time then preſent*, ait, *doth ſay. Whereas S. Bonauenture in the life of S. Francis making mention how in his*

life time he had that saying of-
tẽ in his mouth, vseth the time
past. Dicere solitus erat. He
was wont to say, *and not,* he
doth say, *vsed by our author,*
adding with all *the* epitheto
of (humble) *more proper to*
saints yet liuing then departed
this life, and canonized by the
Church, as S. Francis was *in*
the yeare 1228.

Ans. I answere still that
such light cõiectures as thes
drawen out of the proprie-
tie or manner of speech m-
ther shewe the cause is
weake which needes such
weake supports: then that
they ought to be regarded
against such witnesses, and
so continuall possession as

we haue shewen: Yet with your leaue I will follow the Prefacer to the Grammer, and tell him, that though *aio* be a *verbe* defectiue, and want the *Tens* or *time perfectly past*, amongst the best Latinists, yet is it not so amongst the best scripturists, and the scripture it selfe (wherin your Thomas was more conuersant) as doth appeare by an hundred places in the new and old Testament: wherof these two will serue our turne Math. c. 26. the 25. and 26. verse. Where, *ait*, is twice vsed in the same sense in which here it is vsed, to witt, not for *doth say*,

in the time preſent as the preface tranſlates it ; but *ſaid* in the preter imperfectens or *præter. mixtum*, as the famous Doctors of Rhemes turne it.

But admitt it were of the preſent *tens* : yet is it not an ordinarie thing, and are we not euẽ taught it by rethorike, to vſe the preſent tens for the preter perfect tens, to expreſſe our ſelues with more energie and vigour ?

That S. Bonauenture expreſſed himſelfe by *dicere ſolitus erat*, putts no obligation vpon another to follow the ſame phraſe, or forme of ſpeech.

And as for the addition of

that Epithete *humble*, it ought not to be of more force to draw *Francis* to the earth, then *Sainte* (being the next word, though the prefacer skipt ouer it) to raiſe him to heauen. I meane; if *humble* argued that he was yet (then) a liue; certainely *Sainte* concluded that he liued in heauen. *Dicique beatum ante obitum nemo ſupremaque funera poteſt.* But take the paynes to looke into our Thomas his *Manuale paruulorum*, and you will find the ſame Epithites againe, (*quid fecit humilem & ſanctum Franciſcum &c.*) 200. yeares after S. Francis his departure.

And Note here that S. Bona. dyed not as the Pref. ſaith, Anno 1254. but 1274.

Pref. *Laſt of all to conclud this diſcourſe with the iudgment of learned mẽ of this age, and skilfull in antiquities in all contries. In Italie Card. Bell. Poſſeuin. Nigronius, Roſignolius, all of the Societie of Ieſus, vpon the sight of the ſole Manuſcript of Aron, haue in their writings iudged it to Iohn Gerſen the Benedictin Abbot.*

Ans. Marke, I beſeech you, how vnlikely a way the Prefacer goes to worke, to find out the truth. The difficultie, you know,

is about a matter of *fact*, which happened in the 15. hundred Age; and he flyes to the iudgmēt of the learned of the 1700. wherin we are. As though the iudgement of the learned, and not rather the ſinceritie of the vnlearned were required to make good *a fact*. And not rather ſoone one of that age, wherein it was done, who in preſence could vndoubtedly know, and euen ſee the truth of it; then heapes of witneſſes who cannot reach to it in ſuch a diſtance but onely by gueſſe. Were not old Parre a ſurer witnes of what he had ſeene paſſe in

the begining of his age, thē all the diuines in England gueſſing at it after his death? ſuch a witnes we produce. Let the Prefacer produce ſuch an one alone in lieu of the foure he names; Who, though they be learned, skilfull, and without exceptiō indeed in that kind, yet ſince they bring not in a teſtimonie of their owne knowledge, but a iudgement, or rather a gueſſe framed out of the informations of one ſide onely or eſpecially; it will be thought no diſparagement to thē for vs to ſticke to ſuch as better knew the *Fact*. It being manifeſt that

the leaſt child in your Monaſterie, better knowes what paſſes amongſt themſelues then all the Ieſuites in the world. Yet lets heare what they ſay againſt vs, or rather let vs onely obſerue what Card. Bellarmine ſaith, ſith the Prefacer admitts of him to ſpeake for all the reſt.

Pref. *His words in English are theſe. It is probable that the Author of that treatiſe of the Imitation of Ieſus Chriſt, was one Iohn Gerſen Abbot, as appeares by a moſt ancient inſcription in a Manuſcript copie therof kept in the Monaſterie of Aron, which had bene heretofore a Monaſterie of Be-*

nedictine Monkes, but now a nouishppe of the Societie of Ie-ſus. And ſo it ſeemes that this booke was giuen to Iohn Ger-ſon meerely by likenes of name, the true Author hauing bene Iohn Gerſen: but afterwards being not found amongſt the workes of Iohn Gerſon Chan-celour of Paris, was giuen to Thomas of Kempis for ſome likenes of ſtile; although like-wiſe it was not to be found amongſt his workes. Thus far Bell.

Ans. Doe not you ſee what a modeſt iudgment Bellarmine pronounceth. *It is probable*, ſaith he, and *it ſeemes*. He ſaith not, *manifeſt euident Vnanſwerable*. All

this we may eaſily grant without any preiudice to our clayme : for *probable* hath no force againſt *proofe* which we bring. And many things *ſeeme* which are not, *multa videntur quæ non ſunt*. Yea it often happēs, that that, which being ſeene with a litle light, or at a great diſtance, *ſeemed* to be a man, drawing neere, proues quite another thing. And ſo it happened euen here with Bellarmine: for while he beheld the buſines onely in a doubtfull Manuſcript: and in Abbot Caietanes coniecturall information, he held it *probable*, and it *ſeemed* to him that

Gerſen

Gerſen was the Author. But when he heard Roſweyde ſpeaking for the other ſide, bring a cleare light, wherin he could not be mistaken, he confidently gaue his *ſentence* for our Thomas in theſe words, *ſcriptos & compoſitos eſſe ab eodē Thoma libros de Imitatione Chriſti ſupraſcriptos, contrariis coniecturis euerſis, demonſtrat euidenter in vindiciis Kempenſibus*, Heribertus Roſweydus Societatis Ieſu: cuius mihi rationes pleniſſimè ſatisfecerunt & ſententiā penitus amplector. *Heribertus Roſweyde of the Societie of Ieſus in his vind. Kemp. doth euidently demonſtrate, the*

bookes of the Following of Christ foremẽtioned, to haue bene written and compoſed by the ſaid Thomas of Kẽpis, the cõtrary coniectures being ouerthrowen; whoſe reaſons moſt fully ſatisfie me, and I wholy imbrace his ſentence or opinion. Bell. in Catal. Eccl. ſcrip. anno Domini 1621. ſome yeares after his other editions, and after he had heard both parties.

Pref. *The later impreſsions of Colon, haue corrupted him in fauour of Thomas of* Kempis, *making htm to deny himſelfe.*

Ans. I ſay the later impreſſions of Colon did not corrupt him. And I aſſigne

the ſame reaſon for my negatiue which you for your affirmatiue. I meane none at all, while yet you know, *affirmantis eſt probare*, euery one is liable to proue his affirmation. Nor is it true that Bellarmine doth deny himſelfe; he onely affirmes that for certaine now, which before he was doubtfull of.

Pref. *As if his authoritie alone could preuayle againſt ſo many proofes to preiudice the truth.*

Ans. If you diſlike his authoritie, why doe you make vſe of it againſt better proofes then you haue

yet shewen any ? such in-deed as need not the helpe of moderne authors, as we haue alreadie said.

Pref. *He* (*Trithemius*) *liuing in the same age with Thomas of* Kempis , *in the same contrie, and not far from him, in his Catalogue* de vir. Ill. Germ. *recalling that opinion which he had written fiue yeares before, in his Cat.* de Scrip. Eccl. *touching the Author of this booke, sayes plainely: That Thomas of* Kempis, *who dyed in the yeare* 1471. *could not be the Author therof: Because he* (saith Trith) *liued in this our age; whereas the booke of the Imitatiõ of Christ, was by the testimonie of our an-*

cients read by their Anceſters.

Ans. We grant that Trith liued *in the ſame age*, with Thomas; *in the ſame contrie*, and it may be, not far from him too We grant alſo that theſe are verie good qualities of a witnes, and ſuch as we both bring and againe and againe prouoke our aduerſarie to bring. (And I wish Trithemius had them all in greater perfection then he hath, becauſe you shall heare him by and by giue his voyce for Thomas.) Yet muſt we not needs confeſſe, that Tritth. comes far short of the forenamed Buſchius in this behalfe? For Tritth

though his contrie-mã was borne onely in the yeare 1462. and ſo was but 9. yeares old when Thomas dyed, and ſo could not know him much to the purpoſe. Wheras Buſchius was borne about the yeare 1403. almoſt threeſcore yeares before, vp towards our Thomas his tyme: to witt, the yeare 1379. ſo that they had a faire tyme to make acquaintance in, eſpecially being ſo neere neighbours, and both of one order &c. as we haue ſaid aboue.

Pref. *In his Catalogue* de viris Ill Germ. *recalling that opinion which he had written*

fiue yeare before in his, Cat. de Scrip. Eccl. *touching the Author of this booke.*

Ans. This is a miſtake; he recalled nothing; nor did he firſt write this, de Scriptor. Eccl. but euen that, de viris Ill. Germ. which is manifeſt, becauſe this cites that other. And indeed Bollandus ſaith it was written the yeare after. But what ſayes he?

Pref. *He ſayes plainely, that Thomas of Kempis who dyed in the yeare* 1471. *could not be the Author therof.*

Ans. The Prefacer will pardon me; he nether ſaith ſo plainely, nor yet obſcurelye: nether any

other thing to his purpoſe: vnleſſe he be drawen to it by force. Lets heare Tritth: his reaſon.

Pref. *Becauſe he liued in this our age*: *whereas the booke of the Imitation of Chriſt*, *was by the teſtimonie of our ancients*, *read by their Anceſters.*

Ans. Tritthemius his words are a litle falſified, and his ſenſe diſtracted and forced. Heare his owne words as they ly *in Catal. de viris Ill.* which he wrote firſt. Thomas de Kempis ordinis Can. Reg. S. Aug. mortis D. Mar. & Virg. Agnetis, in Diœceſi Traiectenſi, vir in ſcrip. ſtu-

dioſus & eruditus, vita & conuerſatione deuotus, & B. Mariæ Deiparentis cultor præcipuus, Gerardi magni Dauentrienſis (vt ferunt) quondam Diſcipulus, de quo mirifica narrantur. Scripſit quædam deuota volumina, de quibus feruntur ſubiecta. De contemptu mundi, & Imitatione Chriſti lib. 4. Et notandum (ait Tritthemius) quod duo feruntur &c. which for breuities ſake I will putt word for word into English. *And note (ſaith Tritth.) that two are ſaid to haue bene of that name, both of Kempis, both Regulars in the Mount of S. Agnes, both excellent for Witt,*

and both making diuers ſmale Workes (*opuſcules*) *The firſt of them being conuerted to religion in the tyme of Mr. Gerard the Great, and held* Worthy *of diuine reuelations, is ſaid, to haue* written *the forementioned opuſcules* (*to* witt.) De contemptu mundi & de imitatione Chriſti libri quatuor, &c. Now *the ſecond* was *yet aliue almoſt in our tymes, and compoſed diuers things,* which *are not yet come to our hands. And perhapps ſome things are aſcribed to the firſt,* which *the ſecond is thought to haue done. But the booke of the Imitation of Chriſt, is ſaid to be the firſt Authors,* which *our Anceſtors many yeares ſince report that*

their Anceſters had read. Although ſome I know, herein thinke the contrarie.

Ans. Marke how doubtfull a witnes Tritthemius is in this place, and yet how iuſt in diſcouering his doubts, 1. in apprehending by report (*feruntur*) that there was two Thomaſes, brothers, wheras indeede the eldeſt brother, who was Prior of S. Agneſes, was vndoubtedly called Iohn. Chron. S. Agnetis, c. 8.

2. That the firſt, to witt Iohn (whom he by report apprehended to be called Thomas) had *diuine reuelations*, while indeed it was our Thomas who had thē.

Chron. Windis. l. 2. c. 11. ad neuer the other. And consequently, he it was, who in Tritth. his opinion was *said* to haue written *de Contemptu mundi & de Imit. Christi &c.* sith, it was he that had the reuelations.

3. In that he was ignorant that Thomas liued in his age (saying not as the Prefacer absolutly, but *pene* almost in our tyme) while yet it is certaine, that he liued not onely in the same age, to witt the 15. hundred, but euen about 9. yeares after Tritth was borne, which was in the yeare 1462. Thomas dying 1471. which yet Trith.

knew not.

4. In alleadging his owne, *perhapps*, or gueſſe, againſt ſome others *thought* or ſuppoſition, ſaying; *perhapps ſome things are aſcribed to the firſt, which the ſecond is thought to haue done.*

5. In affirming the booke of the Imitat. of Chriſt to be *ſaid* onely (not be knowen) to be the firſt Authors, which if it were, yet were he a Kempis, a Canon Regular; Not Geſſen, Geſen or Gerſen a Benedictin Monke. This doubt neuer fell inn, amongſt all the doubts that Tritth. had, but onely whether the older or younger Kẽpis were

the Author. Yea and the ground of this doubt too, as it ſeemes, was, becauſe his Anceſters reported that their Anceſters had many yeares a goe read that booke, which, all things being well conſidered, implyes no contradiction, but might well be. For Thomas in the yeare 1409. was 30. yeares old, a perfect man, yea and had then bene 10. yeares in that religions Monaſterie of S. agnes, which was yet feruent in its primitiue zeale, in which being a man of great recollection and deuotion, he might well haue made ſo great progreſſe as

to haue composed that booke (being as it appeares by all the ancient editions, and by Trith and Conrades Catalogues, the first he wrot.) Whereas Tritthemius wrote not this booke, till the yeare 1495. to witt 86. yeares after Thomas was come to mans estate, fitt to compose such a booke. And was not 86. yeares tyme enough, for one of Tritth ancients though of 70. or 80. yeares old, to haue heard one more ancient then himselfe; say he had read that booke? Nay heare what Tritth himselfe adds too against the opinio that some had that the

booke of the Imitation was the firſt Authors, *Although*, ſaith he, *ſome I know herein thinke the contrarie.* Wherevpon euē he, in his booke, *de Scrip. Eccl.* which, he wrote after the forenamed, *de viris Ill. Ger.* ſeeming to be more ſatisfyed in that behalfe then before he had bene, reſolues the whole doubt in theſe words. *Thomas de* Kempis *&c. Scripſit pro inſtructione ſimplicium fratrum non ſpernenda opuſcula. De quibus feruntur ſubiecta de Contempru mundi libri* 4. *qui ſequitur me non, &c. Thomas of* Kempis *&c.* wrote *for the inſtruction of his ſimple brothers diuers opuſcules not*

to be deſpiſed. Whereſ theſe vnder-written are ſaid to be foure bookes of the contempt of the world. Who followes me &c. wheras it is certaine that our Thomas, not his brother Iohn, wrote thoſe *inſtructions ad nouitios* yet extant, and conſequently that too of *the Following of Chriſt* now in queſtion, as far forth as Trith. can informe himſelfe and vs. Now let the world iudge whether this author ought to be alledged againſt Thomas or not; at leaſt ſo, as to make any thiug for Gerſen.

Pref. *Gabriell Butzelin in his letters dated the* 18. *of De-*

cemb. 1630. &c. my ſelfe and all our fathers here, hold it for vndoubted that Thomas of Kempis could not be the Author therof. For in all our Libraries there be verie many written Copies far more ancient then that of Kempis. One in Oſchenhauſe written in the yeare, 1427. &c.

Ans. His and the reſt of their fathers opinion, is no more to vs, then the force of the reaſon he brings, which is his Manuſcript of 1427. to which we anſwere: we haue one in Thomas his name, of the ſame yeare at Nouimagiũ ſo Roſweyde in vind. kemp. c. 7. Edit. Antuerp. 1621. in fine Chro.

Windeſ. Beſides that, he might well haue compoſed it 17. or 18. yeares before, as we haue alreadie shewed.

Pref. *Another extant and to be ſeene in this our Librarie of Wemgart with this ſubſcription. Here ends the booke of inward conſolation finished in the yeare* 1330. *&c.*

Ans. Here I would giue you the cauſe, if I had not diſcouered that you miſſe aboue 100. yeares in the date of the tyme, for it should be, as I ſee by Fa. Francis his Latine Edition, 1433. that you would ſay. ſo that it is alreadie anſwered in the precedent paragraphe.

So you putt downe before that S. Bonauenture departed this life 1254. which indeed was 1274. And the date of your Wibling Manuſcript is 1430. written, as you ſay, in the Counſell of Baſile: while it began onely the yeare after, to witt 1431. Truly I doe not apprehend that there was any deceipfull meaning in any of theſe citations, but I aſcribe them to miſtake, ouerſight, or error in the print, yet any will note the while, that it is hard, the iudgemēt of a cauſe should depend vpon any ſuch vncertainties; and eſpecially

where the other ſide hath as abſolute proofes as any can be deuiſed amongſt men.

As for the R. F. Vido: and Don Pedro Manriquez, alledged by the Prefacer againſt Thomas. I anſwere as aboue to Bell. &c. that they came too late to be good witneſes. And as for their iudgements or ſentences they cannot be ſurer then the *allegata*, according to which they are framed: to witt Wemgart Manuſcript of the yeare 1433. and that of S. Bonauenture, both which you will remember are alreadie anſwered before.

Say the ſame to the R. F. Sirmonds opinion, grounded vpon an old Manuſcript kept at Claremont, which ſince it doth not in any thing exceede thoſe others, it muſt haue no more credit then they againſt our prooſes, towitt, the beſt that cã be brought for any matter of Fact.

Now to Monſieur Marillac (who is alreadie anſwered in ſubſtance and wants nothing but application) with whoſe iudgement the preface is concluded, as hauing bene a pious and iudicious man, and one able by his peremptorie ſentence to ouerthrow our

cauſe. I ãſwere, that his pietie will not hurt vs, if we shew his iudgement to haue relyed vpon falſe informations or teſtimonies, and ſo to haue fayled.

The firſt part of his *demonſtration*, as he calles it, was, becauſe the *Author was an Italian*, which he verifies by certaine Italian words, hauing Latine terminations onely. How manifeſtly he was miſtaken herein I haue made manifeſt aboue.

The ſecond, that the Author was a monke. How falſe his concluſion, (therfore a Benedictine) ſee what I haue ſaid aboue to

the Prefacer, who vrges that point further then euer the ſaid Monſieur Marillac.

The third, laſt, and as he himſelfe eſteemes it, *the ſtrongeſt, neceſſarily concluding that T. of* Kempis *neither was nor could be the Author* (to witt, of the Imit. &c.) is that teſtimonie of Tritth. *de vir Ill. Germ.* which I produced and anſwered aboue. Iudge then what good iudgement, or certaine concluſion he could draw, out of ſuch, if not falſe, at leaſt miſtaken premiſes.

Hauing therfor (venerable Lady and Religious

Dames) *Firſt* made good your continuall poſſeſſion. by the diuers moderne and ancient editions aboue cited, wherof ſome were of aboue 120. yeares ſtanding before euer any clayme was made for Geſſen or Gerſen.

Secondly, proued that the ſaid poſſeſſion was, *bonæ fidei*, or iuſt, by two wittneſſes without all exception (to ſay nothing of the diuers originall Manuſcripts, &c.)

Thirdly, manifeſtly shewen that of all the cloudes of arguments, produced to the contrarie by the English Prefacer, no one doth

euidently conclude. It reſts.

FIRST.

That your Kempis is the Author of the *Following of Chriſt*, by vertue of that maxime of the law, vſed ſo long agoe by Tertullian. *Olim poſſideo, prior poſſideo*, I poſſeſſe anciently, I poſſeſſe firſt.

SECONDLY.

That the ſaid poſſeſſion muſt ſtand good, being Warranted by two ſuch wittneſſes: or els not onely the dictamen of the comõ, ciuill, and canon law muſt fayle, but euen all humane faith muſt perish: that I

may not ſay, that Apoſtolicall Oracle, *in ore duorum vel trium teſtium ſtabit omne verbum*, muſt be called in doubt.

THIRDLY.

That all the former arguments, which at the moſt doe but moue ſome doubt, or make the thing in ſome pointes doubtfull or obſcure at the firſt ſight, ought to haue no reſpect at all, but are to be reiected as non-proofes: according to that of the law, *ſi Actor non potuerit ſuam* (ſcilicet rem) *eſſe probare, remanet in ſuo loco poſſeßio. If the Plaintife or pretendant doe not proue the*

thing to be his: the poſſeſſion remaines where it was, as I alſo.

Your euer deuoted ſer-
uant, and moſt affect,
Fa. in Ieſus Chriſt,
T. C.

Anne. Smith
Son her Book

THE FIRST BOOKE OF THE FOLLOWING OF CHRIST.

CHAPT. I.

Of the Imitation of Christ, and contempt of all the Vanities of the World.

HE that followes me, walkes not in darknesse, saith our Lord. These are the words of Christ, by which we are ad-

monished, that we ought to imitate his life, and manners, if we will be partakers of his diuine light, and be deliuered from all blindneſſe of hart. Let therfore our chiefeſt care be to meditate vpon the life of Ieſus Chriſt.

2. The doctrine of Chriſt exceedes all the doctrine of the Saints : and he that had the light of ſpirit. Would diſcouer therin a ſecret & hidden Manna. But it falles out that many, who often heare the Goſpell of Chriſt, do yet feele in themſelues but ſlender motiō of any holy deſire, becauſe they are void of the ſpirit of Chriſt. But whoſoeuer wil fully and feelingly vinderſtand the wordes of Chriſt, muſt endeauour to conforme his whole life to the life of Chriſt.

3. What will it auaile thee, to

diſpute profoundly of the Trinity, if thou be voyd of humilitie, and therby be diſpleaſing to the Trinitie? High wordes, ſurely, make not a man holy ād iuſt; but a vertuous life maketh him deare to God. I had rather feele compunction, thē vnderſtand the definition therof. If thou didſt knowe the whole Bible by harte, and the Sayinges of all the Philoſophers, what would all that profit thee, without charity, and the grace of God? Vanity of vanities, and all is vanity, but only to loue God, & wholy to ſerue him. This is the higheſt wiſedome, by contempt of the worlde, to tend towards the Kingdome of heauen.

4. It is therfore vanity, to ſeeke after fading riches, and to repoſe truſt in them. It is alſo vanity, to gape after ho-

nours, and to clime to high de-grees. It is vanity to follow the appetites of the flesh, and to la-bour for that, for which thou must afterwardes suffer grie-uous punishmentes. Vanity it is, to wish to liue long, and to be careleſſe to liue well. It is vanity to minde only this pre-ſent life, and not to foreſee thoſe thinges which are to come. It is vanity to ſett thy loue on that which ſpeedily paſſes away, and not to haſten thither, where euerlaſting ioy is permanent.

5. Call often to minde this prouerbe: That the eye is neuer ſatisfied with ſeeing, nor the eare filled with hearing. Endeauour therfore to with-draw thy hart from the affec-tion of viſible things, and to turne thy ſelfe to the inuiſible. For they that follow their ſen-

ſuality, doe ſtaine their owne conſciences, & looſe the grace of God.

CHAPT. II.

Of the humble conceipt of our ſelues.

ALl men by nature deſire to know: but what auailes knowledg without the feare of God? Surely, an humble husbandman that feares God, is better then a proud Philoſopher that neglecting himſefe, laboures to vnderſtand the courſe of the heauens. Who knowes himſelfe well, growes daily more contemptible in his owne conceipt, and delightes not in the praiſes of men. If I vnderſtood all that is to be knowne in the world, and were not in charity, what

would it help me in the ſight of God, who will iudge me according to my deedes?

2. Giue not thy ſelfe to inordinate deſire of knowledg: for therin is much diſtraction and deceipt. The learned are willing to ſeeme ſo to others, and to be accompted wiſe. There be many things, which doe little or nothing profit the ſoule to know: and he is very vnwiſe, that beſtowes his labour about other thinges, then thoſe that may auaile him for the health of his ſoule. Many words do not ſatisfy the deſires of the harte: but a good life comfortes the mind, & a pure conſcience giues great aſſeurance in the ſight of God.

3. How much the more, and better thou vnderſtãdeſt, ſo much the more grieuouſly shalt thou therfore be iudged, vnleſſe

thy life be alſo more holy. Be not therfore extolled in thy owne mind for any Art or ſcience which thou knoweſt; but rather let the knowledge giuen thee, make thee more fearefull. If thou thinkeſt that thou vnderſtandeſt and knoweſt much; know alſo, that there be many things more, which thou knoweſt not. Thinke not too well of thy ſelf, but rather confeſſe thine ignorance. Why wilt thou prefer thy ſelfe before others, ſith there be manie more learned & skilfull in the Law then thou? If thou wilt knowe or learne any thing profitable, deſire not to be knowne, but to be little eſteemed of by men.

4. The higheſt & moſt profitable reading, is the true knowledge and conſideration of our ſelues. It is great wiſdome and

perfection, to esteeme nothing of our selues, and to thinke alwaies well and commendably of others. If thou shouldest see another openly sinne, or commit any heynous offence, yet oughtest thou not to esteeme the better of thy selfe, for thou knowest not how long thou shalt be able to remaine in good estate. We are all frayle, but thou oughtest to esteeme none more frayle then thy selfe.

CHAPT. III.

Of the doctrine of truth.

HAppy is he whom Truth by it selfe doth teach, not by figures, and voices that passe away; but as it is in it selfe. Our owne opinion and sense doth often deceaue vs, and it discernes little. What auailes it to

diſpute and contēd about darke and hidden things, wheras for being ignorant of them, we shal not ſo much as once be reprehēded at the day of iudgment? It is a great folly to neglect the things that are profitable and neceſſary, and giue our minds to that which is curious ād hurtfull. We haue eyes and doe not ſee.

2. And what haue we to do with the termes & diſtinctions of Logitians? He to whom the Eternall Word ſpeakes, is deliuered from the multitudes of opinions. By that one Word all thinges do ſpeake, and all declare the ſame: and this is the beginning, and that which ſpeakes vnto vs. No man without that Word, vnderſtandes or iudges rightly He to whom all things are one, who drawes all things to one, and

ſees all things in one, may enioy a quiet mind, and remaine peaceable in God. O God, the eternall Truth, make me one with thee in euerlaſting charity. It is tedious to me often to read & heare many things. In thee is all that I would haue, and can deſire. Let all Doctours hold their peace: let all creatures be ſilēt in thy ſight: ſpeak thou alone vnto me.

3. How much the more one is retired within himſelfe, and becommes inwardly ſincere, and pure: ſo much the more, and higher myſteries doth he vnderſtand without labour: for that he receaues light of vnderſtanding from aboue. A pure, ſincere and ſtayed ſpirit, is not diſtracted, though he be imploied in many wotkes: for that he wortkes all to the honour of God, and laboures for

inwarde tranquility, without ſeeking himſelfe in any thing he doth. Who hinders and troubles thee more, thē the vnmortified deſires of thine owne harte? A good aud deuout man, firſt of al diſpoſes in himſelfe his outward works; neither do they draw him to the deſires of an inordinate inclinatiō, but he orders them to the preſcript of reaſon. Who hath a greater combate, then he that labours to ouercom himſelf? This ought to b our endeauour, to cōquer our ſelues and daily to wax ſtronger, and alwaies in this way to get ſome ground.

4 All perfection in this life, hath ſome imperfections mixt with it: and no ſpeculation of ours is voide of darkneſſe. An humble knowledg of they ſelfe is a more ſecure way to God, thē a deepe ſearch after know-

ledge : yet knowledg is not to be blamed, nor the only knowledg of any thing whatsoeuer is to be disliked, it being good in it selfe, and ordained by God : but a good conscience, and a vertuous life, is to be preferred before it. And for that many endeauour, rather to gett knowledg, then to liue well, therfore they are oftẽ deceiued, and reape either none, or very slender profit of their labours.

5. O, if men bestowed as much labour in the rooting out of vices, & planting of vertues, as they doe in mouing doubts & questiõs, neither would there so much hurt be done, nor so great scandall be giuen in the world, nor so much loosnes be practised in Monasteries Truly at the day of Iudgmẽt, we shall not be examined what we haue read, but what we haue

done: nor how wel we haue ſpoken, but how vertuouſlie we haue liued. Tell me now, where are all thoſe great Doctours and Maiſters, with whom thou waſt ſo well acquainted, whilſt they liued and flourished in learning? Now others poſſeſſe theit liuings, & perhaps do ſcarce euer thinke of them. In their life time they ſeemed ſomthing, and now they are not ſpoken of.

6. O, how quickly doth the glory of this world paſſe away! Would to God their life had bene anſwerable to their learning, then had their ſtudy and reading bene to good purpoſe. How many perish in this world by reaſon of vaine learning, who take little care of the ſeruice of God? And becauſe they rather chooſe to be great then humble: therfore they

vanish away in their owne thoughts. He is truly great that is great in charity. He is trulie great, that is little in himſelfe, and that makes no accompt of the highth of honour. He his truly wiſe, that accomptes all earthly thinges as dung, that he may gaine Chriſt. And he is truly learned, that fulfilles the will of Chriſt, and forſakes his owne.

CHAPT. IV.

Of, Prudence, and Foreſight in our actions.

WE muſt not giue eare to euery ſuggeſtion or inſtinct, but warily, & leaſurely ponder things according to the will of God. But (alas) ſuch is our weakeneſſe, that wee rather often beleeue, and ſpeake euill of others, thē good. Thoſe

that are perfectly vertuous, do not eaſily giue credit to euery thing that is told them, for they know that humane frailty is prone to euill, ād very ſubiect to faile in words.

2. It is great wiſdome not to be rash in thy proceedings, nor to ſtand ſtifly in thine owne conceipts; as alſo not to beleeue euery thing which thou heareſt: nor preſently to relate againe to others, what thou haſt heard, or doſt beleeue. Conſult with him that is wiſe and of a good conſcience, and ſeeke to be inſtructed by a better then thy ſelfe, rather then to follow thine owne inuentions. A good life makes a man wiſe according to God, & giues him experiēce in many things. How much the humbler one is in himſef, & more ſubiect & reſigned vnto God: ſo much

the more prudent and peaceable shall he be.

CHAPT V.

Of the reading of holy Scriptures.

TRuth, not eloquence, is to be ſought for in holy Scriptures. Each part of them is to be read with the ſame ſpirit it was made. We ſhould rather ſearch after ſpirituall profit in Scriptures, then ſubtility of ſpeech. We ought to read deuout and ſimple bookes, as willingly as high and learned. Let not the reputation of the writer offend thee, whether he be of great or ſmall learning: but let the pure loue of truth moue thee to read. Search not who ſpeakes this, or that, but marke what is ſpoken.

2. Men

2. Men paſſe away, but the truth of our Lord remaines for euer. God ſpeakes vnto vs ſundry waies, without reſpect of perſons. Our owne curioſity often hindres vs in reading of the Scriptutes, when as we will examine, and diſcuſſe that which we should rather paſſe ouer without more adoe. If thou deſire to reape profit, read humbly, plainly, and faithfully: neuer deſire the eſtimatiō of learning. Inquire willingly, & heare with ſilēce the words of holy men: diſlike not the Parables of Elders, for they are not recounted without cauſe.

CHAPT. VI.

Of inordinate Affections.

WHenſoeuer a man deſires any thing inordinatly, he

is preſently diſquieted in himſelf. The proud and couetous can neuer reſt. The poore and humble in ſpirit, liue together in all peace. The man that is not wholy dead in himſelfe, is quickly tempted, and ouercome in ſmall and trifling thinges. The weake in ſpirit, and he that is yet in a manner ſubiect to his appetites, and prone to ſenſible things, can hardly withdraw himſelfe altogether from earthly deſires. And therfore he is often afflicted, when he goes about to retire himſelfe from them: and eaſily falles into indignation, when any oppoſitiō is made againſt him.

2. And if he hath followed therin his appetite, he is preſently diſquieted with remorſe of conſcience, for that he yielded to his paſſion, which profites him nothing to the

obtaining of the peace he ſought for. True quiet of minde therfore, is gotten by reſiſting our paſſions, not by obeying them. There is no peace in the hart of a carnall man, nor of him that is addicted to outward things, but in the ſpiritual and feruent.

CHAPT. VII.

Of flying vaine Hope, & Pride.

HE is vaine that puttes his truſt in men, or creatures. Be not ashamed to ſerue others, for the loue of Ieſus Chriſt: nor to be eſteemed poore in this world. Preſume not vpon thy ſelfe, but place thy hope in God. Doe what lies in thy power, and God will aſſiſt thee. Truſt not in thine owne knowledg, nor in

the ſubtiltie of any liuing creature, but rather in the grace of God, who helpes the humble, and humbles the preſumptuous and proud.

2. Glorie not in wealth, if thou haue it; nor in the power of thy friends, but in God, Who giues all things, and aboue all deſires to giue thee himſelf. Extoll not thy ſelfe for the ſtature, and beautie of thy body, which is diſſolued, and diſfigured with euery little ſicknes Take not pleaſure in thy naturall gifts, or witt, leaſt thereby thou diſpleaſe God, to whom appertaines all the good whatſoeuer nature hath giuen thee.

3 Eſteeme not thy ſelfe better then others, leaſt perhaps in the ſight of God, who knowes what is in man, thou be accompted worſe then they. Be not proud of thy good workes,

for the iudgments of God are farre different from the iudgments of men, & that often offendes him, which pleaſes thē. If there be any good in thee, beleeue that there is much more in others, that ſo thou maieſt conſerue humility. It is no preiudice vnto thee, to eſteeme thy ſelfe worſe then all the world: but it hurtes thee very much, to prefere thy ſelfe before any one. The humble enioy continuall peace; but in the hart of the proud, is enuy and frequent indignation.

CHAPT. VIII.

That too much familiarity is to be shunned.

LAy not thy hart open to euery one: but treate of thy affaires with the wiſe, and ſuch

as feare God. Conuerſe not much with young people, and ſtrangers. Flatter not the rich; neither do thou appeare willingly before great perſonages. Keepe cõpany wjth the hũble; ſimple, deuout, and vertuous, and confer with them of thoſe things, that may edify. Be not familiar with any woman, but in general commend all good women to God. Deſire to be familiar with God alone, and his Angells, ãd fly the acquaintance of men.

2. We muſt haue charity towards all, but familiarity with all is not expedient. Sometimes it falles out, that the fame of ſome perſon that is vnknowne, is much eſteemed; whoſe preſence notwithſtandinge is not grateful to the eies of the beholders We thinke ſometimes to pleaſe others by our cõpany,

and we rather diſtaſt thē with our diſordered manners, and the euill cuſtomes which they diſcouer in vs.

CHAPT. IX.

Of Obedience, and Subiection.

IT is a great matter to liue in Obedience, to be vnder a Superiour, and not to be at our owne diſpoſition. It is much ſafer to liue in the ſtate of ſubiection, then of gouernement. Many liue vnder Obedience, rather for neceſſity, then for charity: and ſuch are diſcontented, and do eaſily repine & murmure. Neither can they attaine to freedome of mind, vnleſſe they willingly and hartily put themſelues vnder Obedience for the loue of God. Go whither thou wilt, thou

shalt find no reſt, but in humble ſubiectiō vnder the gouernmēt of a Superiour The imaginatiō and change of places, haue deceiued many.

2. True it is, that euery one willingly doth that which agrees with his owne ſenſe and liking, and is apt to affect thoſe moſt, that are of his owne mind. But if God be amongſt vs, we muſt leaue our owne iudgment, that ſo peace and ſweetnes may be the better preſerued Who is ſo wiſe, that he can fully know all thinges? Truſt not therefore too much to thine owne conceipts: but be willing to heare the iudgment of others. If thy opinion be good, and yet thou doſt leaue it for God ſake and follow the opinion of another, thou shal reape greater benefit therby.

3. I haue often heard, that it is more ſecure to heare and take counſell, then to giue it. It may alſo fall out, that each ones opinion may be good: but to refuſe to yeelde to others, when as reaſon, or cauſe requires it, is a token of wilfullnes and pride.

CHAPT. X.

Of the auoyding ſuperfluity of Wordes.

FLy the vnquietnes of men as much as thou canſt, for the talke of worldly affaires hindres very much, although they be recounted with ſincere intention: for we are quickly defiled, and enthralled with vanity. I could wish that I had often times held my peace,

when I haue ſpoken: and that I had not bene in company. Why do we ſo willingly ſpeake, and talke with one another, when notwithſtanding we ſeldom returne to ſilence, without hurt of conſcience? The cauſe wherfore we ſo willingly talke, is, for that by diſcourſing one with another, we ſeek to receaue comfort one of another, & deſire to eaſe, our mind, ouer wearied with ſundry thoughts: and we moſt willinglie talke, and thinke of thoſe thinges which we moſt loue and deſire; or of thoſe, which we feele moſt contrary vnto vs.

2. But alas, often times in vaine, and to no end: for this outward comfort, is cauſe of no ſmall loſſe of inward, and diuine conſolation. Therfore we muſt watch and pray, leaſt

our time paſſe without any fruit or profit. If it be lawfull, and expediēt for the to ſpeake; ſpeake thoſe things that may edify. A cuſtome, & neglect of our owne good, doth very much ſlacke the raynes to inconſiderate ſpeech. Yet deuout diſcourſes of heauenly things, do greatly further our progreſſe in ſpirit, eſpeciallie where perſons of one minde and ſpirit be gathered together in God.

Of the obtayning of peace, and zeale of ſpirituall profit.

WE might enioy much peace, if we would not buſie our ſelues with the words and deedes of other men, which appertaine nothing to our charge. How can he liue long in peace, who thruſtes

himself into the cares of others? who seekes occasions abrode? who litle or seldome recollects himselfe within his own breast? Blessed are the simple, for they shall enioy much peace.

2. What is the reason, why some of the Saints were so perfect, and contemplatiue? Because they laboured to mortify themselues wholy to earthly desires; and therefore they could with their whole hart, giue themselues to God, and freely attend to their owne affaires. We are too much possessed by our owne passions, and too solicitous for transitoty thinges. We also seldome ouercom any one vice perfecly, nor are we inflamed with a feruent desire to profit in spirit: and therfore we remaine cold in deuotion, and full of tepidity.

3. If We were perfectly dead vnto our ſelues, and not intangled within our owne breaſts, then we might alſo haue ſome taſt of diuine thinges, and feele the ſweetneſſe of heauenly contemplation. The greateſt, and indeed the whole impediment is, for that we are not free from our paſſions, & diſordered inclinations: neither do we endeuour to enter into the path of perfection, which the Saintes haue walked before vs: and when any ſmall aduerſity befalles vs, we are too quickly deiected, and turne our ſelues to human comforts.

4. If we endeauoured couragiouſly, to ſtand in the battaile, ſurely we ſhould feele the fauourable aſſiſtãce of God from heauen. For he who giues vs occaſion to fight, to the end

we may get the victory, is ready to ſuccour thoſe that fight mãfully, and truſt in his grace. If we eſteeme our progreſſe in Religious life, to conſiſt only in theſe exteriour obſeruations, our deuotion will quickly be at an end. But let vs ſet the axe to the roote, that being freed from paſſions, we may enioy true peace of mind.

5. If euery yeare we would roote out one vice, we should quickly become perfect men. But now often times we perceaue it goes contrary, & that we Were better, and of a more pure conſcience at the beginning of our conuerſion, then after many yeares of our profeſſion. Our feruours and profit should increaſe daily; but now it is accompted a great matter, if one can retaine but ſome part of his firſt ſpirit. If we

Would vſe but a litle violence in the beginning, then should we be able to performe all things afterwards with eaſe and ioy of hart.

6. It is a hard matter to leaue that to which we are accuſtomed; but harder to do againſt our owne wils. But if thou doſt not ouercome harder matters, reſiſt thy inclination in the firſt motions, and breake off euill cuſtomes, leaſt perhaps by little and little they draw thee to greater difficulty. O, if thou dideſt conſider how much inward peace thou shouldſt procure vnto thy ſelfe, and ioy to others, by demeaning thy ſelfe well, I ſuppoſe thou wouldeſt be more carefull of thy ſpirituall Profit.

CHAPT. XII.

Of the profit of Aduerſity.

IT is good that we haue ſometimes troubles and aduerſities: for they oftē make a mā enter into himſelfe, remēber that he is heere in banishment, and ought not to place his truſt in any worldly thinge. It is good that we be ſometimes contradicted, and that there be an euill or hard conceipt had of vs: and this, although we doe, & intend well. Theſe thinges helpe often to the attaining of humimility, and defend vs from vaine glory: for then we chiefly ſeeke God for our inward witneſſe, when we are outwardly contemned by men, and ſmale crēdit is giuen to vs.

2. And

2. And therefore a mā should ſettle himſelfe ſo fully in God, that he needed not to ſeeke manie comfortes of men. When a good and vertuous man is afflicted, tēpted, or troubled with euill thoughtes, then he vnderſtandes better the great neede he hath of Gods aſſiſtance, without whoſe helpe he perceiues he can do nothing that is good. Thē alſo he ſorrowes, lamentes, and prayes for the miſeries he ſufferes. Then is he wearie of liuing longer, and wishes that death would come, that he might be diſſolued, and be with Chriſt. Then alſo he well perceaues, that complete ſecurity, and perfect peace, cannot be had in this world.

CHAPT. XIII.

Of resisting Temptations.

SO longe as we liue in this word we cannot be without tribulatiõ and temptation: for as it is written in Iob: Temptation is the life of man vpon earth. Euery one therfore ought to be careful about his temptations, and to watch in prayer, leaſt the Diuell find place to deceaue him, who neuer ſleepes, but goes about ſeeking whõ he may deuoure. No man is ſo perfect and holy but hath ſometimes temptations: & we cannot be altogether free from them.

2. Temptations are often profitable vnto men, though they be troubleſome, and grie-

uous: for in them, man is humbled, purged, and instructed. All the Saints haue passed and profited through many tribulations and temptations; and they that could not beare temptations, became reprobate and fell from God. There is no order so holy, nor place so secret, where there be not temptations or aduersities.

3. There is no man that is altogether free from temptations, whilest he liues on earth, for in our selues is the cause therof, being borne with inclination to euill. When one temptation or tribulation goes away, another commes: and we shal euer haue something to suffer, because we haue lost that innocency with which we were created Many seeke to fly temptations, and do fall more grieuously into them. By

ſight alone we cannot ouercome; but by patience and true humilitie, we become ſtronger then all our enemies.

4. He that only auoides them outwardly, and doth not plucke thē vp by the the roote, ſhall profit little: yea temptation will the ſooner returne vnto him; and he ſhall feele himſelfe in worſe caſe then before. By little and little, and by patience with longanimity (through Gods h lpe) thou ſhalt more eaſily ouercome, then with violence, and thine owne importunity. Take often counſell in temptations, and deale not roughly with him that is tempted; but giue him comfort, as thou wouldſt wish to be done to thy ſelfe.

5. The begining of all euill temptations, is inconſtancy of mind, & litle confidence in

God: for as a ship without a ſterne is toſſed to and fro with the waues; ſo the man that is negligent, and leaues his purpoſe, is many waies tempted. Fire tries iron, and temptation a iuſt man. We know not oftentimes what we are able to doe, but temptations doe shew vs what we are. We muſt be watchfull, eſpecially in the beginninge of the temptation, for the enemy is then more eaſily ouercome, if he be not ſuffered to enter the doore of our harts, but be reſiſted without the gate, at his firſt knocke. Wherfore one ſaid: withſtand the beginings, for an after remedy comes often to late. Firſt there comes to the mind an euill thought, then a ſtrong imagination therof, afterwards delight, and an euill motion, and then conſent: and ſo by little

and little our wicked enemy gettes full entrance, whilſt he is not reſiſted in the begining. And how much the longer one is negligent in reſiſting: ſo much weaker doth he become daily, and the enemy ſtronger againſt him.

6. Some ſuffer greateſt temptations in the begining of their conuerſion; others in the latter ende; others againe are much troubled almoſt through the whole time of their life. Some are but eaſily tempted according to the wiſedome, and equity of the diuine appointment, which weighes the ſtate and deſerts of men: and ordaines all things for the ſauing of his elect.

7. We ought not therfore to deſpaire when we are tempted; but ſo much the more feruently to pray vnto God, that he will

vouchsafe to help vs in al tribulation, who surely according to the saying of S. Paul, will make with temptation such issue, that we may be able to sustaine it. Let vs therfore humble our selues vnder the hand of God in al temptations and tribulations; for he will saue, and exalt the humble in spirit.

8. In temptations and afflictiõs man is proued how much he hath profited; and his merit is therby the greater before God, and his vertues do more openly appeare. Neither is it any great matter if a man be deuout and feruent, when he feeles no difficultie: but if in time of aduersity he beare himselfe patiently, there is hope of great good. Some are kept frõ great temptations, and are often ouercome in small ones,

which do daily occure ; to the end that being humbled, they may neuer preſume on themſelues in great matters, who in ſo ſmall things do ſee themſelues ſo weake.

CHAPT. XIV.

Of auoyding rash Iudgement.

TVrne thine eies vnto thy ſelfe , and beware thou iudge not the deeds of other men rashly. In iudging of others a man alwaies labours in vaine, often erres , and quickly ſinneth ; but in iudging and diſcuſſing of himſelfe , he alwaies laboures fruitfully. We often iudg of things according to our owne deſire ; for priuate affection bereauees vs eaſily of true iudgement. If God were

alwaies the pure intention of our desire, we should not be so much troubled with the repugnance of our owne sense.

2. But oftentimes some inward secret inclination, or outward affection occures, which drawes vs after it. Many secretlie seeke themselues in their actiõs, and knowe it not. They seeme also to liue in good peace of mind, when things are done according to their will, and opinion; but if it succeed otherwise then they desire, they are straightwaies troubled, and much afflicted. The diuersities of iudgments and opinions, cause oftentimes dissentions betweene religious and deuout persons.

3. An old custome is hardly broken, ãd no man is willingly led further thẽ himselfe liketh, If thou dost more rely vpon

thine owne reaſon or induſtry, then vpon the vertue of obedience to Ieſus Chriſt, it wilbe long before thou be illuminated with grace, for almighty God will haue vs perfectly ſubiect vnto him, and that by feruent loue we tranſcend the narrow limits of humane reaſon.

CHAPT. XV.

Of Workes done out of Charity.

NO euill ought to be done for any wordly thing, or for the loue of any man: but yet for the profit of one that ſtãdes in neede, a good worke is ſometimes to be left off, or changed alſo for a better. For by doing this, a good worke is not loſte, but changed into

another of greater merit. The exteriourwork without charity, profites nothing; but whatsoeuer is done of charity, be it neuer so little and contẽptible, becomes wholy fruitfull. For God whighes more with how much loue one workes, then how much he doth. He doth much, that loues much.

2. He doth much that doth a thing well: he doth well that rather serues the cõmon good of others, then his owne will. Oftentimes it seemes to be charity, and it is rather carnality: becauſe naturall inclination, ſelfe-will, hope of reward, and deſire of our owne commodity, will ſeldome be wanting.

3. He that hath true and perfect charity, ſeekes himſelfe in nothing; but only deſires in all thinges that the glory of God

should be exalted. He alſo enuies none, becauſe he loues no priuate good, nether wil he reioyce in himſelfe, but wishes aboue al things to enioy God. He attributes nothing that is good to any man, but wholy referres it to God, from whom, as frō the fountaine all things proceed: in whom finally all Saints haue perfect reſt, by fruition of his glory. O how eaſily would he that hath one ſparke of perfect charity, diſcerne, that all earthly things be full of vanity.

CHAPT. XVI.

Of bearing with the defects of others.

THoſe things that a man cannot amend in himſelfe

or in others, he ought to ſuffer patiently, vntil God ordaine otherwiſe. Think that perhaps it is better ſo, for thy tryall and patience, without which our merits are not much to be eſteemed. Thou oughteſt to pray notwithſtanding, when thou haſt ſuch impediments, that God would vouchſafe to help thee, and that thou maiſt beare them patiently.

2. If one that is once or twice warned doth not amend, contend not with him, but commit all to God, that his will may be fulfilled, and his name honored in all his ſeruants, who knowes how to turne euill into good. Endeauour to be patient in bearing with the defectes and infirmities of others: for that thy ſelf alſo haſt many things which muſt be ſuffered by others. If thou canſt

not make thy ſelfe ſuch an one as thou wouldeſt, how canſt thou expect to haue another in all thinges to thy likinge? We would willingly haue others perfect, & yet we amend not our owne faults.

3. We will haue others ſeuerely corrected, and wil not be corrected our ſelues. The large liberty of others diſpleaſes vs: and yet we will not haue our deſires denied vs. We will haue others kept vnder by rigorous lawes, but in no ſort will we our ſelues be reſtrained. And thus it appeares, howe ſeldome we weigh our neighbour in the ſame ballance with our ſelues. If al men were perfect, what should we haue to ſuffer of our neighbour for God?

4. But now God hath thus ordained, that we may learne to beare one anothers burden

for no man is without defect, no man without burden, no man ſufficient of himſelfe, no mā endued with ſo muçh wiſdome as he needes: but we ought to beare with one another, comfort one another, helpe, inſtruct, and admonish one another. Occaſions of aduerſity beſt deſcoueres how great vertue each one hath: for occaſions make not à man fraile, but do shew what he is.

CHAPT. XVII.

Of a ſolitarie life.

THou muſt learne to breake thy owne will in many thinges, if thou wilt haue peace, and concord with others. It is no ſmall matter to dwel in in Monaſteries, or in

a congregation, and to conuerſe therin without complaint, and to perſeuer there faithfully vntill death. Bleſſed is he that hath there liued well, and ended happily. If thou wilt perſeuer in grace as thou oughteſt, and profit in vertue, eſteeme thy ſelfe as a banished man, and a pilgrim vpon earth. Thou muſt be contented for the loue of Chriſt, to be eſteemed as a foole in this world, if thou doſt deſire to lead a religious life.

2. The habit, and shauing of the crown, do little profit; but chang of manners, and perfect mortification of paſſions, make a true religious man. He that ſeekes any thing elſe but God, and the health of his ſoule, shall find nothing but tribulation and ſorrow. Nether can he remaine long in peace,

that laboures not to be in the meaneſt place, and ſubiect to all.

3. Thou camſt to ſerue, not to gouerne. Know that thou waſt called to ſuffer and to labour, not to be idle, or to ſpend thy time in talke. Here it is that men are proued as gold in the fornace. Here no man can ſtand, vnleſſe he humble himſelf with his whole hart, for the loue of God.

CHAPT. XVIII.

Of the examples of the holy Fathers.

CONſider the liuely examples of the holy Fathers, in whom true perfection and religion shined; and thou shalt ſee how little it is, and almoſt

nothing which we do now in theſe daies. Alas, what is our life if it be compared to them? The Saints ād friends of Chriſt ſerued our Lord in hunger and thirſte, in cold and nakedneſſe, in labour and wearines, in watching and faſting, in prayer and holy meditations, in perſecutions and many reproaches.

2. O, how many and grieuous tribulations ſuffered the Apoſtles, Martyrs, Cõfeſſours, Virgins, and all the reſt that endeauoured to follow the ſteps of Chriſt! For they hated their liues in this world, that they might poſſeſſe their ſoules in euerlaſting life. O, How ſtrict and poore a life led the holy Fathers in the wildernes! How long and grieuous temptations ſuffered they! yea and how grieuouſly were they aſſaulted by their Ghoſtly

enemy! How feruent and frequent praiers offered they daily to God! How rigorous abstinence did they vse! What great zeale, and feruour had they of ther spirituall profit! How strong, and continuall a combat had they for the ouercomming of vices! How pure and vpright intentions kept they vnto God? In the day they laboured, and in the night they were imployed in long prayer; although when they laboured too, they ceased not from mentall prayer.

3. They spent all their tyme with profit: euery houre seemed short which they imployed in the seruice of God; they forgot the necessity of corporall refection, through the great sweetnes they felt in contemplation. They renounced all riches, dignities, honours,

friends and kinsfolkes ; they desired to haue nothing which appertained to the world ; they scarce took thinges necessary for the sustenance of life ; they grieued to serue their bodies euen in necessity. They were poore therfor in earthly things, but very rich in grace & vertues. Outwardly they wanted, but inwardly they were replenished with grace, and spirituall comfort.

4. They were stangers in the world, but neere and familiar friends to God. They seemed to themselues as nothing, and abiect to this world : but they were precious, & beloued in the eyes of God. They were grounded in true humility, liued in simple obedience, walked in charity & patience : and therfore they profited daily in spirit, and obteined great grace

in Gods ſight. They were giuen for an exemple to all Religious perſons, & their example should more ſtyr vs vp to a deſire of our ſpirituall profit, then the number of the lukewarme, draw vs to the neglect therof.

5. O, how great was the feruour of all religious perſons in the beginning of their holy Inſtitution? How great was their deuotion to prayer? How diligent emulation of vertue? How exact diſcipline florished? How great reuerence and obedience, vnder the rule of their Superiour, obſerued they in all thinges? Their footſteps yet remaining teſtify, that they were indeed holy and perfect men: who fighting ſo valantly, trode the world vnder their feet. Now he is greatlie accompted of, who tranſgreſſeth

not, and who can with patiẽce endure that which he hath vndertaken.

6. O coldnes and negligence of our ſtate, that we ſo quickly decline from our firſt feruour, and are come to that paſſe, that very ſlouth and coldnes of ſpirit, makes our owne liues tedious vnto vs. Would to God the deſire to profit in vertue, did not wholy ſleepe in thee, who haſt often ſeene the holy examples of deuout and religious ſoules.

CHAPT. XIX.

Of the Exerciſes of a good Religious perſon.

THe life of a Religious perſon, ought to ſhine with all vertuous, that he may inwardly be ſuch as outwardly

he ſeemes to men. And with reaſon thou oughteſt to be much more within, then is perceaued without: for God beholdes the hart, whom we ought moſt highly to reuerēce wherſoeuer we are: & walke in purity like Angels in his ſight: and to renew daily our purpoſes, and ſtyrr vp our ſelues to feruour, as though this were the firſt day of our conuerſion; and to ſay: Helpe me, my Lord God, in this my good purpoſe, and in thy holy ſeruice, and graunt that I may now this day begin perfectly, for that which I haue done hitherto, is nothing.

2. According to our purpoſe, shal be the ſucceſſe of our profit: and much diligēce is neceſſary to him, that will profit much. And if he that firmly purpoſes, often failes, what

shall he doe, that ſeldome purpoſes anye thing, or with little certainty? It may fall out ſundry wayes, that we leaue off our purpoſe: and if for light occaſions we omit our accuſtomed exerciſes, it ſeldome paſſes without ſome loſſe. The purpoſe of iuſt men, is rather grounded vpon the grace of God, then on their owne wiſdome, in whom alſo they allwayes haue confidence, in whatſoeuer they take in hand. For man doth purpoſe, but God diſpoſes: neither is the way of man in his owne hands.

3. If an accuſtomed exerciſe be ſometimes omitted for ſome worke of charity, or of intention to profit our neighbour, it may eaſily afterward be recouered: but if it be lightly left, through inconſtancy or negligence, it is an offence, and will

proue hurtfull. Though we endeauour what we can, yet shall we easily faile in many things. But yet we must alwayes purpose somthing certaine, especially against that which most hinders vs. We must examine well, and order both our exteriour and interiour actions; for that both are expedient for our progresse in vertue.

4. If thou canst not alwaies recollect thy selfe, yet do it somtimes, and that at least once euery day; to Wit in the morning, or euening. In the morning make thy good purpose; in the euening examine thy self what thou hast bene that day in word, deede, or thougth: for that in these oftētimes perhaps thou hast offended God, & thy neighbour Arme thy selfe with courage against the malicious attempts of thine enemy. Re-

fraine Gluttony, and thou shalt more easily bridle all the disordered inclinations of the flesh. Neuer be altogether idle, but either reading, or writing, or praying, or meditating, or working somthing for the cõmon good: but bodily exercises are to be discreetly vsed, & not to be vndertaken equally of all.

5. Those things that be not common, are not to be done in the sight of al, for priuate things are best done in secret. But thou must beware, thou neglect not that to which thou art bound by common rule, and be ready in performing thy priuate deuotions: but hauing fully and faithfully accomplished all thy duties, and those things that were enioyned thee, if thou hast further leasure, returne to thy selfe as thy deuotiõ desires.

All cannot vſe the ſame exerciſe, but one is more conuenient for this perſon, another for that. According to the diuerſity of times alſo, diuers exerciſes are fitting; for ſome ſute better with feſtiuall dayes, others with daies of labour. We haue need of one kinde in temptations, and of others in time of peace, and quiet. We deſire to thinke of other things, when we are ſorrowfull, then we do when we are cheerfull in our Lord.

6. When principall feaſts draw neere, good exerciſes are to be renewed; ād the inrercesſions of Saints more feruently to be implored. From feaſt to feaſt, we should make ſome good purpoſe, as though we were then to depart out of this world, and to come to the euerlaſting feaſts of heauen.

And therfore we ought to prepare our ſelues carefully at holy times, & to liue more deuoutly, & to keep more exactly all things that we are to obſerue, as though shortly we were to receaue reward of our labour at Gods hands.

7. And if it be differred, let vs think that we were not well prepared, nor worthy as yet of ſo great glory, as shall be reuealed in vs at the time appointed: and let vs labour to prepare our ſelues better for our departure. Bleſſed is that ſeruant (ſayth S. Luke the Euangeliſt) whom when his Lord comes, he shall finde watching: verily I ſay vnto you, he shall place him ouer all that he poſſeſſes.

CHAPT. XX.

Of the loue of ſolitude, and Silence.

SEek a fit time to attend to thy ſelfe, and often thinke of Gods benefits. Leaue curious things. Read ouer ſuch things, as afforde rather compunction, then imployement. If thou withdraw thy ſelfe from ſuperfluous talke, and idle wandring about, as alſo from hearing of newes and tales, thou ſhalt find ſufficient, and fit time to meditate good things. The greateſt Saints auoided the company of men as much as they could, & choſe to liue to God in ſecret.

2. One ſaid: As often as I haue bene amongſt men, I haue returned leſſe man. The

ſame we finde by experience when we talke long. It is eaſier to keep ſilence altogether, then not to exceede in words. It is eaſier for a man to keepe at home, then to demeane himſelfe as he ought in all things abroad. He therfore that deſires to attaine to internall, and ſpirituall graces, ought with Ieſus, to withdraw himſelfe from the people. No man goes ſafely abroad, but he that gladly keepes home. No man ſpeakes without perill, but he that willingly holds his peace. No man ſecurely gouernes, but he that delightes to liue in ſubiection. No man ſecurely commandes, but he that hath learned readily to obey.

3. No man ſecurely reioyces, vnleſſe he hath within him the teſtimony of a good conſcience. And yet the ſecurity of

Saints, was alwaies full of the feare of God. Nether were they lesse carefull and humble in themselues, for that they shined outwardly with grace, & great vertues. But the security of euill men rises out of pride and presumption and in the end deceaues themselues. Neuer promise to thy selfe security in this life, although thou seeme to be a good Religious man, or deuout Hermite.

4. oftentimes those, who in the iudgment of men were of better esteeme, haue bene in greatest danger, by reason of their too much confidence. wherfore it is more profitable to manie, not to be altogether free from temptations, but to be often assaulted, least they should be too secure, and so perhaps be lifted vp in pride, least also they should too freely

giue themſelues to outward comforts. O, how good a conſcience should he keep, that would neuer ſeeke tranſitory ioy: would neuer buſy himſelfe with the thinges of this world: & how great peace and quietnes should he poſſeſſe, that would cut off all vaine ſolicitude, and only thinke of diuine thinges, and ſuch as are profitable for his ſoule, and place all his hope in God!

5. No man is worthy of heauenly comfort, vnleſſe he haue diligently exerciſed himſelfe in holy compunction. If thou deſireſt true contrition of hart, retire thy ſelfe into thy chamber, and exclude the tumults of the world, as it is written: in your chambers be yee ſory. In thy Cell thou shalt find that, which abroad thou shalt often looſe. The Cell, if thou

thou continue in it, waxes ſweet, & if thou loue not to ſtay in it, it becomes irkſome; If in the beginning of thy conuerſion, thou accuſtome thy ſelf to remaine in it, & keep it it well, it will be afterwards vnto thee a deare friend, and a moſt pleaſant comfort.

6. In ſilence and quietnes, a deuout ſoule profits, and learnes the ſecrets of holy Scriptures. There she findes flouds of teares, with which she may every night wash and cleanſe her ſelfe, and be made ſo much the more familiar with her Creator, by how much the further off she liues frō all worldly diſquiet. Who ſo therfore withdrawes himſelf from his acquaintance and friends, God with his holy Angels, wil draw neere vnto him. It were better

for a man to lye hidde, & haue care af himſelf, then being careleſſe of his ſoule, to worke miracles in the world. It is commendable for a Religious perſon to goe abroad ſeldome, to fly to be ſeene, and to be vnwilling to ſee men.

7. Why wilt thou ſee that, which is not lawfull for thee to haue. The world paſſes away, and all its delights. The deſires of our ſenſuality drawe vs to walke abroad, but when the houre is paſt what bringeſt thou home, but a burdened conſcience, and diſtracted thoughts? A ioyfull going abroad, bringes often a ſorrowfull comming home, & a merry euening makes a ſad morning: So all carnall ioy entres gently, but in the end it cauſes remorſe & deſtruction. What is

elſwhere to be ſeene, Which thou canſt not ſee heere? Behold heauen and earth, & all the elements; for of them all other things are made.

8. What is there any where to be ſeene that can long continue vnder the ſunne? Thou thinkeſt perhaps to ſatiate thy ſelfe, and haue thy fil; but thou shalt neuer attaine it. If it were poſſible for the to ſee al things created, preſent before thine eyes, what were it all but a vaine & vnprofitable ſight? Lift vp thine eyes to God in heauen & aske pardon of thy ſinnes & negligēces. Leaue vaine things to the vaine. Attend thou to that which God commandes: shut thy dore vpon thee, & call vpon Ieſus thy beloued. Bē thou with him in thy Cell, for thou shalt not find ſo great peace in any other place: If

thou hadſt ſtaied within, & not giuen eare to idle newes, thou haddeſt kept thy ſelfe better in good peace. But now that thou delighteſt ſometimes to heare nouelties, it is fit thou should ſuffer for it ſome trouble & diſquiet of mind.

CHAPT. XXI.

Of compunction of hart.

IF thou wilt profit any thing, keepe thy ſelfe alwaies in the feare of God, and yielde not too much ſcope to liberty. Containe all thy ſenſes vnder the rule of diſcipline, and giue not thy ſelfe to foolish mirth. Giue thy ſelfe to compunction of hart, & thou shalt finde deuotion. Compunction brings much good, which with too

much liberty is quickly loſt. It is a meruaile that a man can euer perfectly reioyce in this life, if he conſider his banishment, and weigh the many perils, wherwith his ſoule is inuiro-ned. The leuity of our mind, and the little care we haue of our faults, makes vs not feele the ſorrowes of our ſoule.

2. But oftentimes we vainely laugh, when we haue iuſt cauſe to weepe. There is neither true liberty, nor good mirth, but that which is in the feare of God, accompanied with a good conſcience. Happy is he, that can auoyd all cauſe of diſtraction, and draw ſelfe to the vnion of holy compunction. Happy is he, that can abandon all that may defile, or burden his conſcience. Fight manfully, one cuſtome ouercomes another. If thou canſt

forbeare to intermeddle with that which belonges to others; they will not hinder thee in that which thou haſt to doe.

3. Buſy not thy ſelfe in matters which appertaine to others: neither doe thou meddle at all with the affaires of thy betters. Looke firſt of all to thy ſelfe, and haue a more eſpecial care to admonish thy ſelfe, then whomſoeuer thou loueſt beſt. If thou haue not the fauour of men, be not therfore grieued: but let this ſeeme vnto thee a moſt iuſt cauſe of griefe, that thou lookeſt not to thy ſelfe with that care, which beſeemes the ſeruant of God, and a deuout religious perſon. It is oftentimes better and more ſecure, that a man hath not manie conſolations in this life, eſpecially ſuch, as are agreable to the inclinatiõ of our corrupt

nature. But that we haue none at all, or do ſeldome taſt diuine comforts, the fault is ours, that do not ſeeke for compunction of hart, nor do wholy forſake the vaine comforts of this world.

4. Acknowledge thy ſelfe vnworthy of diuine comforts, and that thou haſt deſerued great tribulation. When a man hath perfect contrition, then is the whole world grieuous & loathſome vnto him. A good man findes alwaies ſufficient cauſe of teares and ſorrow; for whether he conſider himſelfe, or weigh the eſtat of his neigbour, he knowes that none liues here without tribulation. And how much the more throughly he conſideres himſelfe: ſo much the more is his ſorrow. Our ſinnes and vices in which we are ſo plunged,

that we can ſeldom contemplate heauenly things, do miniſter vnto vs matter of moſt iuſt ſorrow and harty contrition.

5. If thou didſt thinke more diligently of thy death, then of liuing long, thou wouldeſt without doubt be more careful in the amendment of thy life. And if thou wouldeſt conſider within thy ſelfe, the paines of hell, or of purgatorie, I am perſwaded it would moue thee to endure any labour or paine whatſoeuer in this world, and not to feare any kinde of auſterity. But becauſe theſe things enter not to the hart, and we ſtill loue that which delightes vs, therfore we remaine cold & void of ſpiritual vigour.

6. Oftentimes our want of ſpirit is the cauſe, that our wretched bodies do ſo quickly

complaine. Pray therfore with all humility to our Lord, that he will vouchſafe to giue thee the ſpirit of contrition, and ſay with the Prophet. Feed me, O Lord, with the bread of teares, and giue me to drink with teares in meaſure.

CHAPT. XXII.

Of the conſideration of humane Miſery.

MIſerable thou art wherſoeuer thou be, & whitherſoeuer thou turneſt, if thou turneſt not thy ſelfe to God. Why art thou troubled when thinges ſucceed not as thou wouldeſt, & deſireſt? Who is there that hath all thinges as he will? Neither I nor thou, nor any man vpon

earth. There is not anie man in this world without ſome tribulation or affliction, though he be a King, or a Pope. Who thinkeſt thou then is in beſt caſe? Truly he that willingly ſufferes ſomething for God.

3. Many weak aud feeble men ſay: Behold how well ſuch a one liues, how rich, how powerfull, how beautifull, how great a man he is! but lift vp thine eyes to the riches of heauen, & thou shalt ſee, that all temporal proſperity is as nothing, full of vncertainty, and which rather oppreſſeth then otherwiſe: for it is neuer had without ſolicitude & feare. The felicity of man, conſiſtes not in hauing aboundance of temporall riches: but a meane ſufficeth. It is trulie miſery enough to liue vpon earth. How much more a man deſires to be ſpiri-

tuall, ſo much the more diſtaſtfull is this preſent life vnto him: for he better perceaues, & ſees more cleerly the defects of human corruption. For to eate, to drinke, to watch, to ſleepe, to labour, to repoſe, and to be ſubiect to all other neceſſities of nature, is doubtleſſe a great miſery to a deuout mind, that would gladly be free & deliuered from all ſinne.

4. The inward man is much oppreſſed with theſe corporall neceſſities, whilſt he is in this world. And therfore the holy Prophet, prayes with great deuotion to be deliuered from them, ſaying: Deliuer me, O Lord, from my neceſſities. But woe be to them that know not their miſerie, and much more to them that loue this miſerable, and corruptible life. For ſome there be ſo dotingly affe-

cted vnto it, that although with labour and beginge they ſcarce get bread to eate, yet if they might liue heere alwaies, they would care but litle for the Kingdome of heauen.

5. O ſenſleſſe creatures and infidels in hart, who lie buried ſo deepe in earth, that they haue no taſt nor feeling, but of ſenſuall things! But miſerable wretches, they shall in the end feele, to their coſt, how vile, and of no eſteeme was that which they loued The Saints of God and the deuout friends of Chriſt, reſpected litle what pleaſed their natural inclinations, or what flourished in this life: but with their whole hopes and intentions, they ſought after the riches of heauen. Their whole deſire was caried vp to thoſe euerlaſting treaſures, which are in-

uiſible; leaſt they might haue bene drawne to baſe affections, by the loue of viſib'e thinges. Looſe, not brother, thy hope to profit in ſpiritual matters: there is yet time: the houre is not yet paſt.

5. Why wilt thou deferre thy good purpoſe? Riſe vp in this verie inſtant, and begin, and ſay: Now is the time to worke, the time to fight: now is it a fit time to amend my ſelfe. When any tribulation, or affliction doth befall thee, then is the time to merit. Thou muſt paſſe through fire and water, before thou come to reſt Vnleſſe thou vſe violence to thy ſelfe thou ſhalt not ouercome thy euill inclinations. As longe as we carry about with vs this frayle body of ours, we can neuer be without tediouſnes and griefe. We would gladly enioy quietnes, and be deliuered from all

miſery; but for that we haue by ſinne loſt our innocẽcy, we haue together with it loſt alſo our happines. And therfore it behoues vs to haue patience, & to expect the mercy of God, till this inquiry haue an end, & that which is mortall be ſwallowed vp by life.

6. O, how great is the frailty of man alwayes inclined to euill? To day thou confeſſeſt thy ſinnes, and to morrow thou committeſt againe the ſame which thou didſt confeſſe. Now thou purpoſeſt to take heed, & within an houre thou doſt as if thou hadſt made no purpoſe at all. We may therfore with great reaſon humble our ſelues, and neuer admit any thought of our owne eſteeme, being ſo weak as we are, and ſubiect to euery change. And ſoone may that be loſt by ne-

gligence, which with much labour was hardly gotten by grace.

7. What wil become of vs in the end, who do ſo timely begin to wax colde? Who be vnto vs, if we will ſo giue our ſelues to eaſe, as if all were already in peace and ſecurity; when as yet there ſcarce appeares ſo much as any ſigne of true ſanctity in our conuerſation. It were needfull that we were taught good manners againe like good Nouices, if ſo perhaps there might be ſome more hope of our amendment, and profit in ſpirit.

CHAPT. XXIII.

Of the conſideration of death.

DEath will quickly ouertake thee, & therefore

look how thou liueſt. To day a man is liuing, and to morrow he doth not appeare; and being once out of ſight, he is alſo quickly out of minde. O dulneſſe and hardneſſe of mans hart, who thinkes only on that he ſees, and foreſees not that which is to come! Thou shouldeſt alwayes ſo order thy thoughts and actions, as if this day, or shortly thou wert to depart this life. If thou hadſt a good conſcience, thou wouldeſt not much feare death. It were better to auoid ſinne, then tofly death. If thou be not prepared to day, how wilt thou be prepared to morrow? To morrow is vncertaine, and whether thou shalt ſee it or no, thou knoweſt not.

2. What doth it auaile vs to liue long, when we do ſo little amend? A long life doth not alwaies

waies make vs better, nay rather it oftentimes heapes a great loade of sinnes vpon vs. O that we had spent one day well in this worlde! Many do reckon the yeares of their conuersion, but full slender oftentimes is the fruite of amendment. If it be a dreadfull thing to dye, perhaps it will be more dangerous for thee to liue long. Blessed is he, that hath alwaies before his eyes the houre of his death, and disposeth himselfe daily theruuto, If thou hast at any time seene a man die, thinke with thy selfe, that thou must one day passe the same way.

2. When it is morning, think that perhaps thou shalt not liue vntill night; and when euening comes, do not dare to promise thy selfe the next morning. Be alwaies ready, & so

order thy life, that death may neuer take thee vnprepared. Many die ſuddainly, for the ſonne of man wil come, when we leaſt thinke of it. When that laſte houre ſhall come, thou wilt begin to thinke farre otherwiſe of thy life, and much lament; that thou haſt bene ſo ſlacke and negligent.

4. O, how wiſe and happy is he that now laboures to be ſuch in his life, as he wishes to be found at the houre of his death? For the perfect contẽpt of the world, the feruent deſire to profit in vertue, the loue of diſcipline, the labour of penance, the readineſſe of obedience, the forſaking of our ſelues, and the bearing patiently all aduerſity for the loue of Chriſt, will giue great confidence of a happy end. Thou maiſt do much good whiles

thou art well; but when thou art ſick, what thou wilt be able to doe I know not. Few do grow better, and amend themſelues with ſicknes; as alſo they that wander much abroad, ſeldome become holy.

5. Truſt not in thy friends or neighbours; nether do thou put off to future times, the care of thy ſoules health: for thou shalt ſooner be forgotten, then thou doſt imagine. It is better now to prouide in time, and do ſome good before thou goeſt, then to truſt in the help of others, when thou art gone. If thou haſt noe care of thy ſelfe now when thou haſt time, who wil be carefull for thee hereafter? The time which now thou haſt is very precious. Now are the daies of health. Now is the time acceptable. But alas that thou ſpendeſt it

ſo little to thy profit, in which thou mighteſt gaine eternall life? The time will come, when thou wilt deſire one day, or one houre to amend, and I cannot aſſeure thee, that thou shalt obtaine it,

6. O my deareſt brother, from how great danger maiſt thou deliuer thy ſelfe? from how great feare maiſt thou be freed, if thou doſt now liue fearefull, and carefull of thy death? Labour to liue in ſuch ſort, that at the houre of death, thou maiſt rather reioyce then feare. Learne now to dye to the world, that thou maiſt then begin to liue with Chriſt. Learne now to contemne all earthly thinges, that thou maiſt then freelie goe to Chriſt. Chaſtice now thy body with pennance, that thou maiſt then haue aſſured confidence.

7. Ah foole, why doſt thou think thou ſhalt liue long, being not certaine of ſo much as one day? How many haue bene deceaued, and taken out of this world on a ſuddaine, when they leaſt expected it? How often haſt thou heard, how ſuch a one was ſuddainely ſlaine, another was drowned, another falling from ſome high place brake his neeke, another dyed at his meate, another when he was playing: one came to his end by fire, another by ſword, another by plague, another died by the hands of theeues: ſo as death is the end of all, and the life of man paſſes away like a ſhaddow.

8. Who will remember thee and who will pray for thee after thy death? Do now, beloued brother, do now what

thou canſt, for thou knoweſt not how ſoon thou ſhalt die, nor what ſhall befall thee after thy death. Now whilſt thou haſt time, heape together eternall riches. Think on nothing, but on the health of thy ſoule. Haue care only on that which belonges to God. Make the Saintes of God thy friends by honoring them, and imitating their vertues, that when thou departeſt this life, they may receaue thee into their euerlaſting dwellings.

9. Eſteeme thy ſelfe as a pilgrime, and ſtranger vpon earth, and as one to whome the affaires of this world do nothing appertaine. Keepe thy hart free, and lifted vp to God, for thou haſt not heere any permanent Citty. Send thither thy prayers dayly with ſighes, and teares; that thy ſoule may

deserue to passe with much happines to our Lord after death.

CHAPT. XXIV.

Of Iudgment and the punishment of sinne.

IN all things consider the end, and how thou wilt be able to stand before that seuere Iudge, from whom nothing can be hidden, who is not appeased with guifts, nor admites, excuses, but iudges according to iustice. O most wretched & foolish sinner, that feareſt sometimes the countenance of an angry man; what answere wilt thou make to God, to whom al thy wickednes is knowne? Why prouideſt thou not for thy self again that ri-

gorous day of iudgement, in which no man can be excuſed, or defended by another, but euerie one wil be burden inough to himſelfe? Now thy paines are profitable, thy teares acceptable, thy cries are heard, thy ſorrow ſatisfies for thy ſinnes, and purges thy ſoule.

2. The patient man hath a great and healthfull purgatory, who receauing iniuries, grieues more for others malice, then for his owne wronges; prayes willingly for his aduerſaries, and from his hart forgiues their offences, delayes not to aske forgiuues of whomſoeuer he hath offended; is ſooner moued to compaſſion then to anger; vſeth often violence to himſelfe; and laboures with his whole force to ſubdue the flesh in all things to the ſpirit. It is better purge our ſinnes and vices

now, then to reſerue them for purgatory. Verily the inordinat loue we beare to our ſelues, deceaues vs.

3. What other thing shal that fire feede on, but thy ſinnes? How much the more thou ſpareſt thy ſelfe now, and followeſt the deſires of thy corrupt nature: ſo much the more grieuouſly shalt thou be punished hereafter, and ſo much the more matter doſt thou keepe for that purging fire. In the ſelfe ſame wherin a man hath ſinned, shall he be more grieuouſly punished. There shal the ſlouthful be pricked forwardes, with burninge goads. There shall the Gluttons be tormented with inſatiable hunger and thirſt. There shall the laſciuious & the louers of pleaſures, be couered ouer with burninge pitch & brimſtone,

The enuious like raging dogges, shall there howle for griefe.

4. There is no vice that shal not haue his proper torment. The proud, shall be full of all shame and confusion. The couetous, shall be in miserable want. One houre of paine there shall be more sharp, then a hundred yeares of most hard pennance here. There is no rest there, nor comfort for the damned. Heere yet sometimes our labours cease, and we enioy the comfort of our friends. Be now solicitous and sorrowful for thy sinnes; that in the day of iudgment thou maiest be secure in the company of the blessed soules: for then shall the iust stand in great cõstancy, against those that afflicted and oppressed them. Then shall he stand to iudge, who

now doth humbly ſubmit himſelf to the iudgment of men. Then shall the poore and humble haue great confidence, and the proud shall be compaſſed about on all ſides with feare.

5. Then wil it appeare, that he was wiſe in this world, who had here learned to be as a foole and diſpiſed for Chriſt. Then shall affliction patiently ſuffered delight vs, and all iniquity shall ſtop her mouth. Then shall the deuout reioyce, and the irreligious mourne. Then shall the chaſticed flesh more florish thē if it had bene alwaies nourished in delights. Then shall the poore garment shine, and the precious robes appeare contemptible. Then shall the meane cottage be more commended, then the guilded pallace. Then will conſtant patience more auaile vs,

then all earthly power. Then will ſimple obedience be more eſteemed, then all worldly wiſedome.

6. Then ſhall a good and pure conſcience yielde vs more comfort then the profound learning of Philoſophy. Then ſhall the contempt of riches weigh more, thē all the wordlings treaſures: Then wilt thou be more comforted that thou haſt praied deuoutly, then that thou haſt fared daintly. Then wilt thou be more ioyfull that thou haſt obſerued ſilence, then that thou haſt talked much. Then will good workes appeare of much more eſteeme then faire words Then à ſtrict life and harde pennance, Will be more pleaſinge, then all earthly delights. Accuſtome thy ſelfe now to ſuffer a little, that thou maieſt be deliuered

from more grieuous paines. Proue here firſt what thou cāſt endure heerafter If now thou canſt beare ſo little, how wilt thou be able to endure euerlaſtinge torments? If now a little ſufferinge make thee ſo impatient, what will hell fire do heerafter? Aſſure thy ſelf, thou canſt not haue two Paradiſes. It is impoſſible for thee, to enioy delights heere in this world, and raigne herafter with Chriſt in heauen.

7. If thou hadſt hitherto liued alwaies in honors and delights, what woulde it auaile thee, if thou shouldeſt preſently dy? All is vanity, but to loue God, and only to ſerue him. For he that loues God with his whole hart, needes to feare nether death, punishment, iudgment, nor hell. For perfect loue, giues ſecure acceſſe to

God, But he that delightes allwaies in ſinne, what wonder though he alwaies feare death, and be terrified with the thought of Iudgment? Yet it is good, that if loue be not of force to withhold thee from ſin, that at leaſt the feare of hell may reſtayne thee And he that layes aſide the feare of God, can neuer continue long in good ſtate, but fall quickly into the ſnares of the diuell.

CHAPT. XXV.

Of the feruent amendment of our whole life.

BE watchfull and diligent in the ſeruice of God, and oftē think with thy ſelfe wherfore thou cameſt, and why thou didſt leaue the world.

Was it not that thou mighteſt liue to God and become a ſpirituall man? Go on therfore with courage, becauſe thou shalt shortly receaue the reward of thy labours, and there shall be no more feare nor ſorrow in the confines of thy habitation. Thou muſt labour here a while, thou shalt afterwards haue great reſt, yea euerlaſting ioy. If thou continueſt faithfull and diligent in ſeruing of God, do not doubt but God will be faithfull and liberal in giuing thee reward. Thou oughteſt to haue a good hope of getting the victory, but thou muſt not make thy ſelfe aſſeured therof, leaſt thou wax negligent, or be puffed vp with pride.

2. When one that was in great anxiety of mind, often wauering betweene feare and hope,

did once being oppreſſed with griefe, proſtrate himſelf in a Chruch in prayer before an Altar, & ſaid within himſelfe: O if I knew that I should yet perſeuer! he preſently heard as it were a voice frō God, which ſaid: What if thou didſt know it, what wouldſt thou do? Do now what thou wouldſt do then, and thou shalt be ſecure. And being herewith comforted, and ſtrengthned in mind, he committed himſelfe wholy to the will of God, and that noyſome anxiety ceaſed: nether had he any mind to ſearch curiouſly any further, to know what should befall him; but rather laboured to vnderſtand what was the perfect, and acceptable will of God, for the begining and accomplishing of euerie good worke.

3. Hope in our Lord, and do good,

good, saith the Prophet, and inhabit the land, and thou shalt be fed in the riches thereof. One thing there is that drawes manie back from that spirituall good, and the diligent amendment of their liues: the horror of the difficulty, and the labour of the combat. But they aboue others profit most in vertue, that endeauour most to ouercome those things, which are more grieuous and contrary vnto them. For there a man profites more, and deserueth greater grace, wher he more ouercomes and mortifes himselfe in spirit.

4 But all men haue not alike to ouercome and mortify: yet he that is zealous and diligēt, though he haue more passions, shall profit more in vertue, then another that is of a more temperate disposition, if he be lesse

ferueut in the purſuite of vertue. Two things chiefly helpe to our amendment, to wit, to withdraw our ſelues violently from that to which nature is viciouſly inclined, and to labour earneſtly for that vertue, which we moſt want. Be carefull alſo to auoide with great diligence, thoſe thinges in thy ſelfe, which do moſt diſpleaſe thee in others.

5. Gather ſome profit out of euery occaſion, and wherſoeuer thou be, be ſo as if thou ſeeſt or heareſt any good exãple, ſtirre vp thy ſelfe to the imitation thereof. But if thou ſeeſt any thing worthy of repooſe, beware thou do not the ſame, And if at any time thou haſt done it, labour quickly to amend it. As thine eyes obſerue others, ſo art thou alſo noted againe by others. O, how

ſweet and comfortable a thing it is, to ſee the feruent and deuout brethren, endued with good manners and diſcipline. And on the contrary, how pittifull and grieuous a thing it is, to ſee them that liue in a diſſolute and diſordered ſort, not applying themſelues to that, for which they were called! O how hurtfull it is to neglect the aime and end of their vocation, & to buſy themſelues, in that which is not committed to their care.

6. Be mindfull of the purpoſe thou haſt made, & haue alwaies before the eyes of thy ſoule the picture of thy Sauiour crucified. Thou haſt good cauſe to be ashamed, looking vpon the life of Chriſt, ſeing thou haſt ſo ſlacklie endeauoured to conforme thy ſelfe vnto him, though thou haſt walked a

long time in the way of the ſeruice of God. A religious perſon that exerciſes himſelfe ſeriouſly, and deuoutly in the moſt holy life, & paſſion of our lord, ſhal there aboundantly find whatſoeuer is neceſſary, & profitable for him; nether ſhall he need to ſeek any thing elſwher but only in Ieſus. O, if Ieſus crucified would come into our harts, how quickly & fully ſhould we be inſtructed in all truth.

7. A feruent religious perſon takes, and beares all well that is commanded him: but he that is negligent and cold, hath tribulation vpon tribulation, and on all ſides is afflicted: for he is void of inward cõſolation, and is forbidden to ſeeke externall comforts. A religious perſon that liues not according to diſcip'ine, is in great danger of

the ruine of his ſoule. He that ſeekes libertie and eaſe, ſhall euer liue in diſquiet: for one thinge or other will allwaies diſpleaſe him.

8. How do ſo many other religious perſons, who liue vnder the ſtrict rule of clauſtrall diſcipline? They ſeldome goe abroad, they liue retired, they feede meanly, they cloathed courſely, they labour much, ſpeake little, watch longe, riſe earlie, ſpend much time in prayer, read often, and keep themſelues in al kinde of diſcipline. Conſider the Carthuſians, Ciſtercians, and Munkes and Nunns of diuers Orders, how they riſe euery night to ſing praiſes to God. And how vnſeemely then it is for thee, to be ſlouthfull in ſo holy a worke, when as ſo great multitudes of religious perſons,

do begin to glorify God.

9. O, that we had nothing els to doe, but alwaies with our mouth, and whole hart to praiſe our Lord God! O, that thou mighteſt neuer haue need to eate, nor drinke, nor ſleepe, but mighteſt alwaies praiſe God, & only imploy thy ſelfe in the exerciſes of ſpirit: thou wouldſt then be much more happy, then now thou art, when for ſo manie neceſſities, thou art conſtrained to ſerue thy body. Would God theſe neceſſities were not at all, but only the ſpiritual refections of the ſoule, which (alas) we taſt of too ſeldome.

10. When a man commes to that eſtate, that he ſeekes no comfort of any creature, then doth he begin to take perfect contentment, and delight in God. Then ſhall he be conten-

ted with whatsoeuer doth befal him in this world. Then shall he neither reioyce in greate matters, nor be sorrowful for small, but with great integrity & condescēdence comit himself to God, who shall be vnto him all in all: to whom nothing doth perish, nor dye, but all things doe liue vnto him, and serue him at a beck wi[illegible] delay.

11. Remember allwaies the end, and how that time lost neuer returnes. Without care and diligence, thou shalt neuer gett vertues. If thou beginnest to waxe colde, it will be euill with thee: but if thou giue thy selfe to feruour of spirit, thou shalt find much peace, and feele lesse labour, through the assistance of Gods grace, and loue of vertue. The feruent and diligent man is ready, and prepared

for all things. It is harder to reſiſt vices and paſſions, then to toile in bodily labours. He that auoides not ſmall faults, by little and little, fal'es into greater. Thou wilt alwaies reioyce in the euening, if thou ſpend the day profitably. Be watchfull ouer thy ſelfe, ſtir vp thy ſelfe, warne thy ſelfe, and whatſoeuer becomes of others, neglect not thy ſelfe. The greater violence thou vſ'ſt againſt thy ſelfe, the more thou ſhalt profit.

THE SECOND BOOKE.

CHAPT. I.

Of ſpirituall conuerſation.

THe King dome of God is within you, ſayth our Lord. Turne thee with thy whole hart vnto our Lord, and forſake this miſerable world, and thy ſoule ſhall find reſt. Learne to deſpiſe exteriour thinges, & to giue thy ſelf to the interiour, and thou ſhalt perceaue the kingdome of God to come into thee: For the

kingdome of God is peace, and ioy in the holy Ghoſt, which is not giuen to the wicked. Chriſt will come into thee, and shew thee his diuine comfort, if thou prepare for him a worthy manſion within thee. All his glory and beauty is within, and there he pleaſes himſelfe. The inward man he often viſits, and hath with him ſweet diſcourſes pleaſant comfort, much peace, wonderfull familiarity.

2. O faithfull ſoule, make ready thy hart for this bridegrome that he may vouchſafe to come vnto thee, and dwell within thee, For he ſaith: If any loue me, he will keep my word, and we will come vnto him, and will make our aboad with him. Giue therfore vnto Chriſt a place in thy hart, and deny entrance to all others.

When thou haſt Chriſt, thou art rich, and he will ſuffice thee. He will be thy faithfull ād prouident helper in all thinges, ſo as thou ſhalt not need to truſt in men. For mē are ſoone changed, and quickly deceiued; but Chriſt remaines forcuer, and ſtandes firmly vnto the end.

3. There is little truſt to be put in a fraile and mortall man, though he be profitable & deare vnto thee: nether oughteſt thou much to be grieued, if ſomtimes he croſſe, and contradict thee. They that to day take thy part, to morrow may be againſt thee; and ſo on the contrary, they often turne like vnto the winde. Put all thy truſt in God, and feare and loue him: He will anſwere for thee; and do in all thinges what is beſt. Thou haſt not here a dwelling

Citty, and wherſoeuer thou be, thou art a ſtranger and pilgrime: nether shalt thou euer haue reſt, vnleſſe thou be perfectly vnited vnto Chriſt.

4. Why doſt thou linger, and make delaies here, ſince this is not the place of thy reſt? In heauen ought to be thy dwelling, and all earthly things are to be regarded as it were in paſſing by. All things paſſe away, and thou together with them. Beware thou cleaue not to them leaſt thou be enthralled and ſo doeſt periſh. Let thy thought be on the higheſt, and thy prayer directed vnto Chriſt without ceaſing. If thou canſt not contemplate high and heauenly things, reſt they ſelfe in the paſſion of Chriſt, and dwell willingly in the wounds of his ſacred body. For if thou fly deuoutly vnto his holy

wounds, and to the precious markes of his passion, thou shalt feele great comfort in tribulation: nether wilt thou much care for being despised of men, but wilt easily beare the wordes of slaunderous tongues.

5. Christ was also in the world despised and in great necessity; forsaken by his acquaintance, and friends in the middest of slaunders. Christ would suffer, and be contemned, and dareſt thou complaine? Christ had aduersaries and backbiters; and wilt thou haue all men thy friends and benefactours? For what shall thy patience be crowned, if no aduersity befall thee? If thou wilt suffer no aduersity, how wilt thou be the friend of Christ? Suffer with Christ, & for Christ, if thou desire to raigne with Christ.

6. If thou hadſt once perfectly entred into the hart of Ieſus, and taſted a littly of his burning loue, then wouldeſt thou not weigh thyne owne commodity or diſcommodity, but wouldſt rather reioyce at ſlaunders, when they should chance to be caſt vpon thee: for the loue of Ieſus makes a man deſpiſe himſelfe. A louer of Ieſus and of truth, and one interiourly recollected, and free from inordinate affections, can freelie turne himſelfe vnto God, and lift himſelfe aboue himſelfe in ſpirit, and with great ioy of his ſoule reſt in God.

7. He that iudges of all thinges as they are, and not as they are ſaid, and eſteemed to be, is truly wiſe, and taught rather by God then men, He that can liue recollected with-

in himſelfe, and make ſmall reckning of outward things, nether requires places, nor attendes times for performing of deuout exerciſes. A ſpiritual man quickly recollectes himſelfe: becauſe he neuer giues himſelfe wholy ouer to outward things. He is not hindred by outward labour or buſines, which may be neceſſary for the time, but as things fall out, ſo he frames himſelfe vnto them. He that hath well ordered and diſpoſed all things within, cares litle for the vaine inuentions, and peruerſe inclinations of men. So far forth is a man hindred & diſtracted, as he doth ingroſſe buſines to himſelfe.

8 If all went well with thee, and thou hadſt thy hart well purged, all things would fall out to thy good and profit. But

manie things diſpleaſe, and often trouble thee, becauſe thou art not yet perfectly dead vnto thy ſelfe, nor free from the affection of earthly things. Nothing ſo defiles and intangles mans hart, as impure loue to creatures. If thou refuſe outward comfort, thou wilt be able to contemplate heauenly things, and often receiue internall ioy.

CHAPT. II.

Of humble ſubmiſſion.

RESpect not much who is for thee, or againſt thee. Endeauour, and take care, that God may be for thee in euery thing thou doſt. Haue a good conſcience, and God wil defend thee

thee. For whom God will help, no malice of man can hurt. If thou canst hold thy peace and suffer, without doubt thou shalt see that our Lord wil help thee. He knowes the time, and manner how to deliure thee, and therfore thou oughtest to resigne thy selfe to him. It belongs, to God to help, and to deliuer from all shame. Oftentimes it is very profitable, for the better keeping of humility, that others know & reprehend our faults.

2. When a man humbles himselfe for his faults, then he easily pacifies others, & quickly satisfieth those that are offended with him. God protectes and deliueres the humble: he loues and comfortes the hũble: to the humble man he inclines himselfe: to the humble he giues great grace, and after his

humiliation, he raiſes him vnto glory. To the humble he reueales his ſecrets, and ſweetly drawes and inuites him vnto himſelfe. The humble when he hath receaued confuſion, is in peace, for that he reſiſtes in God, and relies not on the world. Doe not thinke that thou haſt profited any thing, vnleſſe thou eſteeme thy ſelfe inferiour to all.

CHAPT. III.

Of a good and peaceable man.

FIrſt keep thy ſelfe in peace, and then maiſt thou pacify others. A peaceable man doth more good, then he that is well learned. A paſſionate man turnes euen good into euill, and eaſily beleeues euill worſt. A good peaceable man turnes al

things into good. He that is truly peaceable, is not ſuſpitious of any; but he that is diſcontented, and troubled, is toſſed with diuers ſuſpitions: he is nether quiet himſelfe, nor ſufferes others to be quiet. He often ſpeakes that which he ought not to ſpeake, and omittes that which were more expedient for him to do, He conſideres what others are bound to doe: & neglectes that which he is bound to himſelfe. Firſt therefore haue a carefull zeale ouer thy ſelfe, & then thou maiſt inſtly shew thy ſelfe zealous of thy neighbours good.

2. Thou knoweſt well how to excuſe & colour thine owne deeds, and thou wilt not receaue the excuſes of others. It were more meet, that thou dideſt accuſe thy ſelf, and ex-

cuſe thy brother. If thou wilt be borne withall, beare alſo with another. Behold how far off thou art as yet from true charity and humility, which knowes not how to be angry with any, or to be moued with indignation, but only againſt himſelfe. It is no greate matter to conuerſe with the good, & thoſe that are of a gentle diſpoſition, for that is naturally pleaſing to all, and euery one willingly enioyes peace, and loues thoſe beſt that agree with him. But to be able, to liue peaceably with the vnquiet, & peruerſe minds, or with the diſorderly, or ſuch as contradict vs, is a great grace, very commendable, and a manly act.

3. Some there are, that keep themſelues in peace, and are in peace alſo with others. And

ther ate ſome, that nether are in peace themſelues, nor ſuffer others to be in peace: they are troubleſome to others, but alwaies more troubleſome to themſelues. And others there are that keep themſelues in peace, & labour to bring others vnto peace. How be it our whole peace in this miſerable life, conſiſtes rather in humble ſuffering, then in not feeling aduerſities. He that can beſt tell how to ſuffer, wil beſt keep himſelfe in peace. He is a conquerour of himſelfe, Lord of the world, a friend of Chriſt, and heire of heauen.

CHAPT. LIV.

Of a pure mind, and vpright intention.

WIth two wings man is lifted vp from earthly vani-

ties, that is, with ſimplicity,& purity. Simplicity ought to be in our intention. Purity in our affection. Simplicity aymes at God. Puritie apprehendes and taſtes his ſweetnes. No good action will hinder thee, if thou be inwardly free from inordinate affection. If thou intend and ſeeke nothing els but the good pleaſure of God, and the profit of thy neighbour, thou shalt enioy internall liberty. If thy hart were ſincere and vpright, then euery creature would be vnto thee a looking glaſſe of life, and a booke of holy doctrine. There is no creature ſo little and abiect, that repreſentes not the goodnes of God.

2. If in thine owne hart thou were good and pure, then thou wouldeſt be abe to ſee and vnderſtand all things without

any impediment. A pure hart penetrates heauen, and hell. Such as euery one is inwardly: so he iudges outwardly. If ther be any ioy in the world, surely a man of a pure hart possesses it. And if there be tribulation & affliction any where, an euill conscience best knowes it As iron put into the fire looseth his rust, & becomes bright like fire: so he that wholy turnes himselfe vnto God, becommes feruent, & is changed into a new man.

3. When one beginnes to wax cold: then he is afraid of a small labour, and willingly receaues externall comfort. But when he once beginnes to ouercome himselfe perfectly, and to walke manfully in the way of God, then he esteemes those things light, which before seemed burdēsome to him.

CHAPT V.

Of the consideration of ones selfe.

WE cannot trust much to our selues, for that grace oftentimes and vnderstanding is wanting. There is but little light in vs, & that which we haue, we quickly loose by our negligence, And oftentimes we do not perceaue our owne inward blindnes. We are sometimes moued with passion and we thinke it to be zeale. We reprehend small things in others, and passe ouer greater in our selues We quickly feele, & weigh what we suffer at the hands of others: but we mind not what others suffer from vs. He that doth well and deeply

consider his owne works, will find little cause to iudge hardly of another.

2. A recollected man preferres the care of himselfe, before all other cares. And he that diligently attendes to himselfe, doth seldome speake much of others. Thou wilt neuer be recollected & deuout, vnlesse thou passe ouer other mens affaires with silence, and looke especiallie to thy selfe. If thou attend vnto God and thy selfe, thou wilt be litle moued with whatsoeuer thou seest abroad. Where art thou, when thou art not with thy selfe? And when thou hast runne ouer all, what hast thou profited, if thou doest neglect thy selfe? If thou desirest peace of mind and true vnion, then thou must put euen all behind thee, and only place thy selfe, before thy eyes.

3. Thou shalt therfore profit much, if thou keepe thy selfe free from all temporall cares. Thou shalt hinder thy selfe greatly, if thou esteeme any thing of this world. Let nothing be great vnto thee, nothing high, nothing grateful, nothing acceptable, but only God himselfe purely; or that which is for God. Esteeme all comfort vaine which thou receaueſt from any creature. A soule that loues God despises all things that be inferiour to God. God alone is euerlasting, and of infinite greatnes, filling all creatures: the comfort of the soule, and the true ioy of the hart,

CHAPT. VI.

Of the comfort of a good Conscience.

THe glory of a good man, is the testimony of a good conscience. Haue a good conscience, and thou shalt euer haue ioy. A good conscience is able to beare much, and is cheerfull in aduersities. An euill conscience is alwaies fearfull & vnquiet. Thou shalt rest sweetly, if thy hart doth not reprehend thee. Do thou neuer reioyce, but when thou hast done well Sinners haue neuer true mirth, nor feele inward peace: because there is no peace to the impious, saith our Lord. And if they say: We are in peace, no euill shall fall

vpon vs, and who shall dare to hurt vs, beleeue them not: for vpon a ſuddaine will ariſe the wrath of God, and their deedes shall be turned into nothing, and their conceipts shall perish.

2 To glory in tribulation, is no hard thing for him that loues; for to glory ſo, is to glory in the Croſſe of our Lord. That glorie is short, which is giuen and receaued from men. Sorrow alwaies accompanies the glory of the world. The glory of the good is in their conſciences, and not in the tongues of men. The gladnes of the iuſt is of God, and in God: and their ioy is of the truth. He that deſires true and ouerlaſting glory, cares not for that which paſſes away with time. And he that ſeekes temporall glory, or contemnes it

not from his harte, shewes himselfe but litle to esteeme of the glorie of heauen. He enioyes great tranquillitie and peace of mind, that cares nether for the prayses, nor dispraises of men.

3. He will easily be content and pacified, whose conscience is pure. He is not the more holy though thou commend him: not the more abiect though thou dispraise him. What thou art, that thou art: nether canst thou be truly said to be greater, then what thou art in the sight of God. If thou consider what thou art within thee, thou wilt not care what men say of thee. Man sees in the face; but God lookes into the hart. Man considers the deedes, but God weigheth the intentions. To doe alwaies well, and to esteeme little of himselfe, is a

token of an humble minde. To refuſe to be comforted by any creature, is a ſigne of great purity, and inward confidence.

4. He that ſeekes no outward witnes for himſelfe, doth shew that he hath wholy committed himſelfe vnto God. For not he that commendes himſelfe, the ſame is approued (ſaith S. Paul) but whom God commendes. To walke inwardly with God, and not to be poſſeſſed with any outward affection, is the ſtate of a recollected man.

CHAPT. VII.

Of the loue of Ieſus aboue all things.

BLeſſed is he that vnderſtãdes what it is to loue Ieſus and to deſpiſe himſelfe for Ie-

ſus. Thou oughteſt to leaue thy beloued, for thy beloued; for that Ieſus will be beloued alone aboue all thinges. The loue of things created is deceiptfull and vnconſtant: the loue of Ieſus is faithfull and conſtant. He that cleaues to creatures, shall fall with that which is ſubiect to fall. He that imbraces Ieſus shal ſtand firmely for euer. Loue him, and keep him for thy friend, who when all go away, will not forſake thee, nor ſuffer thee, to perish in the end. Thou muſt once be left of men, whether thou wilt or no.

2. Liue and die with Ieſus; and commit thy ſelfe vnto his truſt, who when all faile, can alone help thee. Thy beloued is of that nature, that he will none of that which appertaines to others: but will haue thy

hart alone, and ſit like a King in his owne throne. If thou couldeſt purge thy ſelfe perfectlie of all creatures, Ieſus would willingly dwell with thee. Whatſoeuer thou repoſeſt in men, out of Ieſus, is all no better then loſt. Truſt not, nor rely vpon a reed ful of wind: for that all flesh is as hay, and all the glory therof shall wither away, as the flower of the field.

3. Thou shalt quickly be deceaued, if thou looke only to the outward shew of men. And if in them thou ſeekeſt thy comfort and profit, thou shalt often feele loſſe. If thou ſeekeſt Ieſus in all thinges, thou shalt ſurely finde Ieſus. But if thou ſeekeſt thy ſelfe, thou shalt alſo find thy ſelfe, but to thyne owne harme. For man doth more hurt himſelfe, if he ſeeke not Ieſus, then

then the whole world and all his aduerſaries could annoy him.

CHAPT. VIII.

Of familiar friendshipe with Ieſus.

WHen Ieſus is preſent, all is well, and nothing ſeemes difficult: but when Ieſus is abſent euery thing is hard. When Ieſus ſpeakes not inwardly vnto vs, our comfort is nothing worth: but if Ieſus ſpeake but one word, we feele much conſolation. Did not Mary Magdalen preſently riſe from the place where she wept, when Martha ſaid vnto her: Thy maiſter is here, and cales thee? Happy is the houre, when Ieſus calles from teares of ſpiri-

tual ioy. How dry and harde art thou without Ieſus? How foolish and vaine, if thou deſire any thing out of Ieſus? Is not this a greater loſſe then if thou shouldſt looſe the whole world?

2. What can the world profit thee without Ieſus? To be without Ieſus, is a grieuous hell; and to be with Ieſus, is a ſweete Paradiſe. If Ieſus be with thee, no enemy can hurt thee. He that findes Ieſus, findes a good treaſure: yea a good aboue all goods. And he that looſes Ieſus looſes too much, & more then the whole world. He is moſt poore, that liues without Ieſus: and he moſt rich, that ſtands in Ieſus his fauour.

3. It is a great skill to know how to conuerſe with Ieſus: and a great wiſedome, to know how to keepe Ieſus. Be humble,

and peaceable, and Ieſus wil be with thee. Be deuout and quiet, and Ieſus will ſtay with thee. Thou maiſt driue away Ieſus and looſe his grace, if thou giueſt thy ſelfe to outward things. And if thou ſhouldeſt driue him from thee, and looſe him, to whom wilt thou flie, and what friend wilt thou then ſeeke? Without a friend, thou canſt not well liue: and if Ieſus be not aboue all a friend to thee; thou ſhalt be too too ſorowfull and deſolate. Thou doſt therfore foolishly, if thou doeſt truſt or reioyce in any other. It is better for thee to haue all the world againſt thee, then Ieſus offended with thee. Amongſt all things therfore that be deare vnto thee, let Ieſus alone be thy chiefeſt beloued.

4. Loue all for Ieſus, but Ie-

ſus for himſelfe. Ieſus Chriſt alone is eſpecially to be beloued; who alone is found to be good, & faithfull aboue all friends. For him & in him, let as well friend as foes be deare vnto thee: and all theſe are to be prayed for, that all may know and loue him. Neuer deſire to be ſingularly commended or beloued, for that appertaines only to God, who hath none like vnto himſelf. Nether do thou deſire that the hart of any, should be ſet on thee, nor do thou ſet thy hart on the loue of any: but let Ieſus be in thee, & in euery good man.

5. Be pure and free within, and intangle not thy harte with any creature. Thou oughteſt to be as it were naked, and carry a pure harte to God, if thou wilt conſider, ād proue, and ſee how ſweet our Lord

is. And truly, vnleſſe thou be preuented, and drawne by his grace, thou ſhalt neuer attaine to that happines, to forſake and caſt away all, that thou alone maiſt be vnited to him alone. For when the grace of God commes vnto a man, then he is ſtrong, and nothing is hard to him. And when it goes away, he is poore and weake, and as it were left vnto the will of whomſoeuer will afflict him. In this thou oughteſt not to be deiected, nor deſpaire; but to reſigne thy ſelfe with all indifferency vnto the wil of God and to beare all thinges that befall thee, for the glory of Chriſt: for after winter followes ſummer, after night commes day, and after a tempeſt, faire weather.

CHAPT. IX.

Of the want of all comfort.

IT is no great matter to deſpiſe humane comfort, when we haue diuine. It is much and very much, to be able to want, both humane and diuine comfort: and for the honour and glorie of God, to be willing to endure deſolation of hart; and to ſeeke himſelfe in nothing, nor to regard his owne merit. What greate matter is it, if thou be cheerful and deuout at the comming of heauenly grace? This houre is wished for of all men. He rides eaſily, whom the grace of God carries. And what meruaile, if he feele not his burden, who is borne vp by the Almighty, and led by

the greateſt guide?

2. We are alwaies willing to haue ſomething for our comfort: and a man doth hardly put off, and forſake himſelfe. The holy martyr S. Laurence, ouercame the world with his Prieſt, becauſe he deſpiſed whatſoeuer ſeemed delightſome in the world: and for the loue of Chriſt, he patiently ſuffered the high Prieſt of God S. Syxtus to be taken from him, whom he moſt loued. He ouercame therfore the loue of man by the loue of the Creator; & he rather choſe the diuine pleaſure, then humane comfort See thou alſo learne to forſake ſome neceſſary thing, & a beloued friend for the loue of God. Be not grieued when thou art forſaken by a friend, knowing that we all at length muſt be ſeparated one from another.

3. A man muſt fight long, and with a conſtant minde, before he get the victory, and be able to place his whole harte in God. When a man confides in himſelfe, he eaſily ſlides vnto humane comfort. But a true louer of Chriſt, and a diligent follower of vertue, giues not himſelfe to ſuch ſolace, nor ſeekes ſenſible ſweetnes, but rather forcible exerciſes, and to ſuſtaine hard labours for Chriſt.

4. When therfore ſpirituall comfort is giuen thee frō God, receaue it thankfully, but know that it is the gift of God, not any deſert of thine. Be not puffed vp, ioy not too much, neither do thou preſume vainely: but be rather the more humble for that grace, and more wary and fearefull in all thy actions: for that houre

will passe away, and temptation will succeed. When consolation is taken from thee, despaire not presently ; but with humility and patience, attend the heauenly visitation : for God is able againe to giue thee greater consolation. This is not new, nor strange vnto them, that haue experience in the way of God : for in the great Saints and ancient Prophets, there was oftentimes such kind of alteration.

5. For which cause, one when he had grace, said : I said in my plenty, I will not be moued euerlastingly. But when this was gone from him, he addes what he found in himselfe, saying : Thou turnedst thy face from me, and I became troubled. Yet doth he not despaire in the middest of these changes, but more earnestly prayes

to our Lord, & ſayth: Vnto thee (ô Lord) I wil cry, & I will pray vnto my God. Laſtly he receaues the fruit of his prayer, and witneſſeth that he was heard, ſaying: Our Lord hath heard me, and taken pitty on me: our Lord is become my helper. But wherein? Thou haſt turned (ſaith he) my ſorrow into ioy, and thou haſt compaſſed me about with gladnes. If great Saints haue bene ſo dealt withall, we that are poore and weake, ought not to deſpaire, if we be ſometimes colde; for thy ſpirit commes and goes, according to the good pleaſure of his will. For which cauſe bleſſed Iob ſaith: Thou viſiteſt him early in the morning, & ſuddainly thou proueſt him.

6. Wherupon therfore can I hope, or wherin ought I to truſt, but in the great meroie

of God alone, and in the only hope of heauenly grace? For whether I enioy the presence of good men, or deuout brethren, or faithfull friendes, or holy bookes, or learned treatises, or sweet songes and hymnes, al they helpe little, and haue little sauour, when grace forsakes me, and I remaine left in my owne pouerty. At such a tyme there is no better remedie then patience, and the resigninge of my selfe vnto the will of God.

7. I neuer founde any so religious and deuout, that hath not had sometimes a withdrawing of grace, or felt not a decrease of feruour. There was neuer Saint so highly rapt, and illuminated, who first or last, was not tempted. For he is not worthy of the high contemplation of God, who hath not bene

exercised with some tribulation for Gods sake. For temptation going before, is wont to be a signe of ensuing comfort. And vnto those that are proued by temptations, heauenly comfort is promised. He that shall ouercome, saith he, I will giue him to eate of the wood of life.

8. But diuine comfort is giuen, that a man may be stronger to beare aduersities. There followes also temptation, least we should waxe proud of that good. The diuell sleepes not, neither is our flesh as yet dead, therfore cease not to prepare thy selfe to the battail: for on thy right hand, and on thy left, are enemies that neuer rest.

CHAPT. X.

Of thankefulnesse for the Grace of God.

WHY seekest thou rest, since thou art borne to labour? Dispose thy selfe to patience, rather then to comforts: & to the bearing of the Crosse, rather then to gladnes. What secular person is there, that would not willingly receaue spirituall ioy and comfort, if he could alwaies haue it? Spirituall comforts exceed al the delights of the world, and al the pleasures of the flesh. All wordly delights are either vaine or vncleane: but spirituall delights are only pleasant and honest, produced by vertues, and infused by God into pure

harts. But no man can alwaies enioy theſe diuine comforts, according to his deſire: for the time of temptation is not long away.

2. Falſe freedome of mind, and great truſt of our ſelues, is very contrary to heauenly viſitations. God doth well in giuing grace: but man doth euill in not returning it againe wholy vnto God, with thākeſgiuing. And therefore the gifts of grace cannot flow in vs, becauſe we are vngratefull to the giuer: and returne them not wholy to the head fountaine. For grace is euer due to him that is thankefull, and from the proud ſhall be giuen to the humble.

3. I deſire not that conſolation that takes from me compunction: nor that contemplation which breedes a haugh-

ty mind. For all that is high, is not holy, nor all that is ſweet, good, nor euery deſire, pure, nor euery thinge that is deare vnto vs, is gratefull to God. I do willingly accept of that grace, whereby I may euer become more humble and fearefull, and be made more ready & able to forſake my ſelf. He that is taught by the gift of grace, and by the ſcourge of the withdrawing thereof, will not dare to attribut any good to himſelf: but will rather acknowledg himſelfe poore, and naked. Giue vnto God, that which is Gods, and aſcribe vnto thy ſelfe, that which is thine owne: that is, giue thankes vnto God for his grace, and acknowledge that nothing is to be attributed to thee, but only ſinne, and the punishment due thereunto.

4. Content thy ſelfe, alwaies with the meaneſt & loweſt thinges, and the higheſt ſhall be giuen thee: for the higheſt, ſtand not without the loweſt. The higheſt Saints before God, are the leaſt in their owne iudgments. And how much the more glorious, ſo much the humbler within themſelues, Thoſe that are full of truth and heauenly glory, are not deſirous of the vaine glory of this world. Thoſe that are firmely ſetled and grounded in God, can no way be proud. And they that aſcribe all vnto God, what good ſoeuer they haue receaued, ſeeke not gloire one of another: but would haue that glory which is from God alone, and deſire aboue all things to praiſe God in himſelfe, and in all the Saints, and

alwaies tend vnto the ſame.

5. Be therefore gratefull for the leaſt gift, and thou ſhalt be made worthy to receaue greater. Let the leaſt be vnto thee alſo as the greateſt: & the moſt contemptible as an eſpeciall gift. If thou conſider the worth of the giuer, no gift will ſeeme litle, or of meane eſteeme. For it is not little that is giuen by the ſouueraigne Maieſty of God, Yea if he ſhould giue punishment and ſtripes, it ought to be gratefull, for that he doth it alwaies for our ſaluation, whatſoeuer he permites to happen vnto vs. He that deſires to keepe the grace of God, let him be thankful for the grace giuen, and patient for the taking away thereof. Let him pray that it may returne. Let him be wary and humble,

least he loose it.

CHAPT. XI.

How few the louers of the Crosse of Christ are.

IEsus hath now many louers of his heauenly kingedome, but few bearers of his Crosse. He hath many desirous of comfort, but few of tribulation. He findes many companions of his table, but few of his abstinence. All desire to reioyce with him, few will suffer any thing for him, or with him. Many follow Iesus vnto the breaking of bread: but few to the drinking of the Chalice of his passion. Many reuerence his miracles, few follow the ignominy of his Crosse. Many praise and blesse him, as long

as they receaue any comfort from him. But if Ieſus, hide himſelfe, and leaue them but a while, they fall either into complaint, or into too much deiection of mind.

2. But they that loue Ieſus for Ieſus, and not for ſome comfort of their owne, bleſſe him in all tribulation and anguish of hart, as well as in the greateſt comfort. And though he should neuer giue them comfort, they notwithſtanding would euer prayſe him, & allwaies giue him thaknes.

3. O how powerful is the pure loue of Ieſus, which is mixed with no ſelfe-loue nor proper intereſt! Are they not all to be called hirelings, that euer ſeek comforts? Doe they not shew themſelues, to be rather louers of themſelues, then of Chriſt, that allwaies

think of their commodity and gaine? Where may one be found that will ſerue God without looking for reward?

4. It is hard to find any one ſo ſpirituall, that is free from the loue of all earthly thinges. For where is any that is indeed poor in ſpirit, and free from all affection of creatures? far hence and from the end of the world is his price. If a man should giue all his wealth, yet is it nothing. And if he should do great pennance, yet is it little. And if he should attaine to all knowledge; he is yet far off. And if he should haue great vertue, and very feruent deuotion, yet there is much wanting: to wit, one thing, which is moſt neceſſary for him. What is that? That leauing all, he farſake himſelfe, and go perfectlie from himſelfe, and

retaine nothing of ſelfe loue. And when he hath done all that he knowes to be done, let him thinke that he hath done nothing.

5. Let him not weigh that much, which might be much eſteemed, but according to truth, let him affirme himſelf to be an vnprofitable ſeruant, as our Sauiour hath ſaid: When you shall haue done all thinges that are commanded you, ſay: We are vnprofitable ſeruants. They may be truly poore in ſpirit and naked, and ſay with the Prophet: I am alone and poore: yet no man richer, no man more powerfull, no man more free then he that can leaue himſelfe in the meaneſt and loweſt place.

CHAPT. XII.

Of the high way of the holy Crosse.

THis speech seemes hard to many: Deny thy selfe, take vp thy Crosse, and follow Iesus. But it will be much harder, to heare that last word: Get yee away from me, yee cursed into euerlasting fire. For they that now willingly heare & follow the word of the Crosse, shal not then feare to heare the sentence of euerlasting damnation. This signe of the Crosse shall be in heauen, when our Lord shall come to iudgment. Then all the seruants of the Crosse, who in their life time cõformed themselues vnto Christ crucified,

shall draw neere vnto our Lord with great confidence.

2. Why therfore feareſt thou to take vp the Croſſe, which leades thee to a kingdome? In the Croſſe is health, in the Croſſe is life, in the Croſſe is protection againſt our enemies, in the Croſſe is infuſion of heauenly ſweetnes, in the Croſſe is ſtrength of mind, in the Croſſe is ioy of ſpirit; in the Croſſe is the height of vertue, in the Croſſe is the perfection of ſanctity. There is no health of the ſoule, nor hope of euerlaſting life but in the Croſſe. Take vp therfore thy Croſſe and follow Ieſus, and thou ſhalt go into life euerlaſting. He is gone before, bearing his Croſſe, and is dead for thee on the Croſſe, that thou maieſt alſo beare thy Croſſe, and deſire to dye on the Croſſe with

him. For if thou dyeſt with him, thou ſhalt alſo liue with him; And if thou be his companion in payne, thou ſhalt be partaker with him alſo in glory.

3. Behold in the Croſſe all doth conſiſt, and all lyes in ending our life vpon it: for there is no other way vnto life, and vnto true inward peace, but the way of the Holy Croſſe, and of daily mortification. Go where thou wilt, ſeek whatſoeuer thou wilt: thou ſhalt not find a higher way aboue, nor a ſafer way below, then the way of the holy Croſſe. Diſpoſe and order all things according to thy will, and iudgement: yet thou ſhalt euer find, that of neceſſity thou muſt ſuffer ſomewhat, either willingly or againſt thy will, ſo as thou ſhalt feele payne in

thy body, or in thy ſoule tribulation of ſpirit.

4. Sometimes thou shalt be forſakē of God, ſometines thou shalt be troubled by thy neighbours; & which is more, oftentimes thou shalt be irkſome to thy ſelf, nether canſt thou be deliuered or eaſed by any remedy or comfort: but ſo long as pleaſeth God, thou oughteſt to beare it, For God will haue thee learne to ſuffer tribulation without comfort; and that thou ſubmit thy ſelfe wholy to him, and become more humble by tribulation. No man hath ſo liuely a feeling of the paſſion of Chriſt, as he who hath chanced to ſuffer the like. The croſſe therfore is alwaies ready, and euery where attēdes thee. Thou canſt not eſcape it, whither ſoeuer thou flyeſt, for whereſoeuer thou goeſt, thou

carieſt thy ſelf with thee, and ſhalt euer finde thy ſelfe both aboue and below, without and within: which way ſoeuer thou doeſt turne thee alwaies thou ſhalt find the Croſſe: and euerie where of neceſſity thou muſt haue patience, if thou wilt haue inward peace, and deſerue an euerlaſting Crowne.

5. If thou beare the Croſſe willingly, it will beare thee, and lead thee to thy deſired end: to wit, where there ſhal be an end of ſuffering, though here there ſhall not. If thou beare it vnwillingly, thou makeſt for thy ſelfe a new burthen, and increaſeſt thy loade, and yet notwithſtanding thou muſt beare it. If thou caſt away one Croſſe, without doubt thou ſhalt finde another, and that perhaps a more heauy.

6. Thinkeſt thou to eſcape

that, which no man could euer auoyd? Which of the Saints in this world was without Crosses, and tribulations? Verily Iesus Christ our Lord was neuer one houre without paine of suffering, so long as he liued. Christ (saith he) ought to suffer, and rise againe from death, and so to enter into his glorie: and how dost thou seek any other way, then this high way, which is the way of the holy Crosse?

7. The whole life of Christ was a Crosse and Martyrdome: and dost thou seeke rest & ioy? Thou art deceaued, thou art deceaued if thou seekest any other thing then to suffer tribulation: for this whole mortall life is ful of miseries, and enuironed on euery side with Crosses. And how much the more one hath profited in spirit; so much the heauier

Croſſes he oftentymes findes: for the loue he beares to God, increaſes the griefe which he endures for his banishment.

8. But yet this man, though ſo many waies afflicted, is not without the remedy of ſpiritual conſolation, for the great good which he perceaues to grow vnto him, by the bearing of his Croſſe. For whileſt he willingly puttes himſelfe vnder it, all the burthen of tribulation, is turned into the confidence of diuine comfort. And how much the more the flesh is waſted by affliction, ſo much the more is the ſpirit ſtrengthened by inward grace. And ſometymes he is ſo comforted with the deſire of tribulation, and aduerſity, for the loue of conforming himſelfe to the Croſſe of Chriſt, that he would not wish at any time, to be

without ſorrow and tribulation. becauſe he beleeues, that ſo much the more gratefull he ſhall be vnto God, how much the more he can ſuffer for him. This is not a worke of humane vertue, but it is the grace of Chriſt, that can, & doth ſo much in fraile flesh: that what naturally it alwaies abhorres and flyes, that by feruour of ſpirit it takes hold on and loues.

9. It is not according to mans inclination to beare the Croſſe, to loue the Croſſe, to chaſtice and ſubdue the body, to fly honors, to ſuffer contumelies with a ioyfull hart, to deſpiſe himſelf, and to wish to be deſpiſed, to beare all aduerſities, and domages, and to deſire no proſperity in this world. If thou conſidereſt thy ſelfe, thou ſhalt be able to performe no ſuch matter of thy

ſelfe. But if thou truſteſt in our Lord, ſtrength shall be giuen thee from heauen, and the world and flesh, shall be made ſubiect to thy commaund. Nether shalt thou feare thy enemy the Diuel, if thou be armed with faith, & ſigned with the Croſſe of Chriſt.

10. Reſolue therfore with thy ſelfe, like a good and faithfull ſeruant of Chriſt, to beare manfully the Croſſe of thy Lord, who was crucified for thy loue. Prepare thy ſelfe to beare many aduerſities and diuers kinds of troubles in this miſerable life: for ſo it will be with thee, wherſoeuer thou be: & ſo ſurely thou wilt find eit; whereſoeuer thou hide thy ſelfe. So it muſt be, and there is no remedy, or meanes to auoide tribulation and ſorrow, but to beare them. Drinke of the cha-

lice of our Lord willingly, if thou wilt be his friend, and desirest to haue part with him. Leaue the desire of comfortes, to God: let him doe therin as shall best please him. Set thou thy hart vpon the suffering of tribulations, and account them the greatest comfortes, for that the passions of this life, are not condigne to future glory, although thou alone couldest suffer them all.

11. When thou shalt come to this estate, that tribulation shall seeme sweet, and pleasant vnto thee for Christ, then thou maist thinke it is wel with thee, for thou hast found a Paradise vpon earth. As long as it is grieuous vnto thee to suffer, and that thou desirest to fly it, so long shalt thou be ill at ease: & the tribulation thou flyest, will follow thee euery where.

12. If thou ſetleſt thy ſelfe to that thou oughteſt, to witt, to ſuffer, and to dy to thy ſelfe, it wil quickly be better with thee, and thou shalt finde peace. Although thou shouldeſt haue bene rapt euen vnto the thirde heauen with S. Paul, thou art not for this aſſured, that thou shalt ſuffer no contradiction. I (ſaith Ieſus) will shew him how great thinges he muſt ſuffer for my name. It reſtes therfore that thou ſuffer, if thou wilt loue Ieſus, and perpetually ſerue him.

13. O, would to God, thou wert worthy to ſuffer ſomthing for Ieſus! how great glory would it be to thee, what ioy to all the Saints of God, how great edification alſo to thy neighbour! For all do commend patience, though few deſir to ſuffer. With great rea-

ſon

ſon thou oughteſt to be willing to ſuffer a little for Chriſt; ſince many ſuffer far greater thinges for the loue of the world.

14. Know for certaine, that thou oughteſt to lead a dyinge life. And how much the more euery one dies to himſelfe; ſoe much the more doth he begin to liue to God No man is fit to attaine vnto heauenly thinges, vnleſſe he ſubmit himſelf to the bearing of aduerſities for Chriſt. Nothing is more gratefull to God, nothing more wholeſome to thee in this world, then to ſuffer willingly for Chriſt. And if it were in thy choyce, thou shouldeſt rather wish to ſuffer aduerſities for Chriſt, then to enioy the delight of many comforts: becauſe by theſe meanes thou shouldeſt be more like to Chriſt, and more conformable

to all the ſaints. For our merit, & the perfection of our eſtate, conſiſtes not in much ſweetnes and comforts, but rather in ſuffering great afflictions and tribulations.

15. If there had ben any better thing, and more profitable to the health of man then ſuffering, ſurely Chriſt would haue shewed it by word, & example. But he planely exhorted all the diſciples that followed him, and all that deſire to follow him, to the bearing of the Croſſe, and ſaith: If any man will come after me, let him deny himſelfe and take vp his Croſſe, and follow me. So as when we haue read and ſearched all, let this be the laſt concluſion: That *by many tribulations we muſt enter into the kingdome of God.*

THE THIRD BOOKE.

CHAPT. I.

Of the inward ſpeech of Chriſt vnto a faithfull ſoule.

I Will heare what our Lord God will ſpeake in me. Bleſſed is the ſoule that heares our Lord ſpeaking in her: and receaues from his mouth, the word of comfort. Bleſſed are thoſe eares that receaue the ſound of the diuine voice, and liſten not to the whiſperings of the world. Bleſſed indeed are thoſe eares

that harken not to the voice which ſoundes outwardly, but vnto truth which teaches inwardly. Bleſſed are the eies that being shut vp to outward thinges, are attentiue to thoſe things that are internall. Bleſſed are they that enter into the inward thinges, and endeauour to prepare themſelues more and more by daily exerciſes to the attaining of heauenly ſecrets. Bleſſed be they that delight to attend to the ſeruice of God, and caſt away all impements of this world.

2. Conſider theſe thinges, my ſoule, and shut vp the dore of thy ſenſuall deſires: that thou maiſt heare what thy Lord God ſpeakes in thee. Thus ſaith thy beloued: I am thy ſafety, thy peace, and thy life. Keepe thy ſelfe with me, and thou shalt find peace. Forſake all

transitory thinges, and seeke those that be eucrlasting. What are tẽporall thinges, but deceauing snares? and what do all creatures auaile thee, if thou bee forsaken by the Creatour? Forsake therefore all earthly thinges, and labour to please thy Creatour, & be faithfull to him, that thou maist attaine to true happines.

CHAPT. II.

That truth speakes inwardlie without noyse of Wordes.

SPeake Lord, for thy seruant heares. I am thy seruant graunt me vnderstanding, that I may know thy testimonies. Stir vp my hart to heare the wordes of thy mouth. Let thy speech descend as the dew into my soule. The children of Is-

rael in times paſt ſaid vnto Moyſes: Speak thou to vs, and we shal heare thee: let not our Lord ſpeake to vs, leaſt perhaps we dye. Not ſo Lord, not ſo I beſeeche thee, but rather with the Prophet Samuel. I humbly and earneſtly intreat: ſpeak Lord, for thy ſeruant heares. Let not Moyſes ſpeake vnto me, nor any of the Prophets, but thou rather ſpeake, my Lord God, the inſpirer, and enlightener of all the Prophets: for thou alone without them, canſt perfectly inſtruct me, but they without thee, can profit nothing.

2. They can pronounce wordes, but they giue not ſpirit. They ſpeak maruelous wel, but if thou hold thy peace, they inflame not the hart. They deliuer the letters, but thou openeſt the ſenſe. They bring forth my-

ſteries, but thou diſcloſeſt the vnderſtandinges. They declare thy commaundements, but thou helpeſt to fulfil them. They shew the way, but thou giueſt ſtrength to walke in it. They worke only exteriourly, but thou inſtructeſt & enlightneſt the hartes. They water outwardly, but thou giueſt fruitfulnes. They ſound forth wordes, but thou giueſt vnderſtanding to the hearing.

3. Let not therfore Moyſes ſpeake vnto me, but thou my Lord God, the euerlaſting truth, leaſt perhaps I should dye, and become without fruit, if I be warmed outwardly only, & not inflamed within: leaſt the word heard and not fulfilled, knowen and not loued, beleeued and not obſerued, should increaſe my iudgment. Speak therefore Lord, for thy

ſeruant heares, for thou haſt the wordes of euerlaſtinge life. Speake to the comfort of my ſoule, and to the amendment of my whole life: & to thy prayſe and glory, & euerlaſting honor.

That the wordes of God are to be heard with humility, and that many weigh them not.

CHAPT. III.

SOnne heare my words, words of great comfort, excelling al the knowledg of the Philoſophers and wiſe men of this world. My wordes are ſpirit and life, not to be weighed by the vnderſtanding of man. They are not to be drawne to vaine liking, but to be heard

with ſilence, and to be receaued with all humility and great affection. And I ſaid: Bleſſed is the man whom shou shalt inſtruct, O Lord, and shalt teach thy law, that thou maiſt giue him quietnes from euil daies, & that he be not abandoned vpon earth.

2. I (ſaith our Lord) haue taught the Prophets from the beginning, and ceaſe not continually to ſpeake to euery one: but many are deafe, and giue no eare to my ſpeech. The greater number doe more willingly liſten to the world, then to God: & follow ſooner the deſires of their flesh, then the wil of God. The world promiſes temporall and ſmall thinges, and is ſerued with great diligence: I promiſe moſt high and eternall thinges, and the hartes of men are nothing moued with it. Who is

he that ſerues and obeyes me with equall care to that with which the world, and the Lords therof, are ſerued? Blush Sidon, (ſaith the ſea.) And if thou aske the cauſe, heare wherfore. For a little prebend, a long iourney is vndertaken: for euerlaſting life many will ſcarce once lift a foote from the ground. A thing of ſmall value is ſought after greedily: for a penny ſomtimes there is great contention: for a vaine thing and ſleight promiſe, men ceaſe not to toile day and night.

3. But alas for an vnchangeable good, for an ineſtimable reward, for the higheſt honour and glory without end, they are loath to take the leaſt paines. Blush therefore ſlouthfull and complayning ſeruant, that they are found more ready to diſtruction, then thou to life. They

reioyce more at vanity, then thou at truth. And yet they are ſometimes fruſtrated of their hope: but my promiſe deceaues none, nor ſendes him away empty that truſtes in me. I will giue that which I haue promiſed. I will fulfill that which I haue ſaid; but to him that remaines faithfull in my loue to the end. I am the rewarde of all the good, and do try my deuout ſeruantes in forcible proofes.

4. Write my wordes in thy hart, and thinke diligently of them: for they will be neceſſary in time of temptation. What thou vnderſtandeſt not when thou readeſt, thou shalt know in the day of viſitation. I am wont to viſit my elect two ſeueral waies, to wit, with temptation, and comfort. And I dayly read two leſſons vnto them, one reprehending their

vices, another exhorting them to the increaſe of vertues. He that hath my words & deſpiſes them, hath within himſelfe that ſhall iudge him at the laſt day.

A prayer to implore the grace of deuotion.

5. Lord my God, thou art all that I can deſire. Who am I, that dare ſpeak vnto thee? I am thy pooreſt ſeruant, and a moſt vile worme? much more poore and contemptible, then I can or dare expreſſe. Remember Lord that I am nothing. Thou alone art good, iuſt and holy, thou canſt doe all thinges, replenish all thinges, leauing only a ſinner voide of all good. Call to mind thy mercies, & fill my hart with thy grace, thou who wilt not that thy workes

be without effect.

6. How can I ſupport my ſelf in this miſerable life, vnleſſe thy mercy and grace comfort me? Turne not thy face from me: delay not thy viſitation; draw not away thy comfort, leaſt my ſoule become as earth without water to thee. Lord teach me to fulfil thy Wil; teach me to liue worthily and humbly in thy ſight; for thou art my wiſdome, thou doſt perfectly knowe me, and didſt know me before the world was made, and before I was borne in the world.

CHAPT. LIV.

That we ought to liue in truth and humilitie in the ſight of God.

SOnne, walke in my ſight in truth; and euer ſeeke me in

plaineſſe of hart. He that walkes in my ſight in truth, shal be defended frō euil incurſions, and truth shal deliuer him from ſeducers, and from the detractions of the wicked. If thou be deliuered by Truth, thou shalt be truly free, and shalt not care for vaine ſpeeches of men. Lord it is true, according as thou ſaiſt, ſo I beſeech thee let it be with me, and keepe me, and bring me to a happy end. Let thy truth teach me, and let it deliuer me from all euill affection and inordinat loue: and I shal walke with thee in great freedome of hart.

2. I will teach thee (ſayth Truth) thoſe thinges that are right and pleaſing in my ſight. Thinke of thy ſinnes with great ſorrow, and grief, and neuer eſteeme thy ſelfe any thing for thy good works. Thou art in

verie deed a ſinner, and ſubiect to many paſſions. Of thy ſelfe thou alwaies tendeſt to nothing, and art quickly caſt downe & ouercome: quickly troubled, quickly diſſolued. Thou haſt nothing wherein thou canſt glory, but many thinges for which thou oughteſt to humble, and deſpiſe thy ſelf: for thou art much weaker, then thou art able to comprehend.

3. And therfore let nothing ſeeme much to thee, whatſoeuer thou doſt Let nothing ſeeme great, nothing precious, and wonderfull, nothing worthy of eſtimation: nothing high, nothing truly commendable, and to be deſired, but that which is euerlaſting. Let the eternall Truth aboue all thinges pleaſe thee. Let thy owne great vnworthines al-

waies diſpleaſe thee. Feare nothing, blame, and fly nothing ſo much, as thy ſinnes, and vices: which ought to diſpleaſe thee more, then the loſſe of any thing whatſoeuer. Some walke not ſincerely in my ſight, but led by a certaine curioſity, and pride, will know my ſecrets, and vnderſtand the high myſteries of God, neglecting themſelues and their owne ſaluation. Theſe oftentimes (for that I reſiſt them) de fall into great temptations and ſinnes, for their pride and curioſity.

4. Feare the iudgment of God, dread the wrath of the admighty. But diſcuſſe not the works of the Higheſt. Search thine owne iniquities, in how much thou haſt offended, and how much good thou haſt neglected. Some carry their deuo-

tion

tion only in bookes, ſome in outward ſignes and figures, ſome haue me in their mouths, but little in their harts. There are others that being illuminated in their vnderſtanding, and purged in ther affection, do alwaies aſpire with an earneſt mind to euerlaſting hapines: and are vnwilling to heare of the things of this world, and do ſerue the neceſſities of nature with griefe; and theſe perceaue what the ſpirit of truth ſpeakes in them. Becauſe it teaches thē to deſpiſe earthly, and loue heauenly things: to neglect the world, and day and night to deſire heauen.

CHAPT V.

Of the wonderfull effect of diuine grace.

I Praiſe thee, O heauenly Father, Father of my Lord Ieſus Chriſt, for that thou haſt vouchſafed to remember me a poore and wretched creature. O Father of mercies and God of all comfort, thankes be to thee, who ſometimes with thy comfort refreſheſt me, vnworthy of all comfort. I euer bleſſe & glorify thee with thy holy Ghoſt for euer. O God my Lord, the holy louer of my ſoule, when thou ſhalt come into my hart, all that is within me will reioyce. Thou art my glorie, and the exultation of my hart. Thou art my hope,

and my refuge in the day of my tribulation.

2. But for that I am yet weake in loue, and imperfect in vertue. I haue neede to be comforted by thee: visit me therefore often, and instructe me with thy holy discipline. Deliuer me from euill passions, and heale my hart of all inordinate affections: that beinge cured within, and well purged, I may be made to loue, and constant to perseuere.

3. Loue is a great matter, in very truth a great good, which alone makes euery thinge that is heauy, light; and beares equally, vnequall burthens. For it carries a burthen without a burthen, and makes euery thinge that is bitter, sweet, and delightsome. The noble loue of Iesus, enforces mā to worke great thinges, and styrres him

vp to desire allwaies the most perfect. Loue will be aloft, and not be kept downe with any base thinges. Loue will be free from all worldlie affection, to the ende his inward sight be not obscured that he be not intangled with the desire of any transitory gaine, or troubled with the want therof. Nothing is sweeter then loue, nothing stronger, nothing higher, nothing more ample, nothing more pleasant, nothing fuller nor better in heauē or in earth: for that loue hath his beginning from God, & cannot rest but in God aboue all creatures.

4. He that loues, flyes, runnes, and reioyces; he is free & not held in. He giues all for all, and hath all in all, for that he restes in one Highest aboue all, from which all good flowes & proceedes. He respectes not

the guifts, but turnes himſelfe aboue all goods vnto the giuer. Loue oftentimes knowes no meaſure, but inflames aboue al meaſure. Loue feeles no burthen, waighes no paines, deſires aboue its ſtrength, complaines not of impoſſibility, for that it thinkes all thinges lawful, and poſſible. It is therfore able to vndertake al thinges, & performes and brings many things to effect: whereas he that doth not loue, faintes & can do nothing.

5. Loue alwaies watches, and ſleeping ſleepes not; being wearied, is not tyred, ſtraitned is not preſſed: frighted, is not troubled: but like a liuely flame, and burning torch, breakes vpwardes, and paſſes through al with great ſecurity. If any one loues, he knowes what this voice cries. A lowd cry in the

eares of God, is the burning loue of the ſoule, which ſaith: My God, my loue, thou art wholy mine, and I wholy thine.

6. Enlarge me in loue, that my hart may taſt how ſweet it is to loue, and to be diſſolued, and ſwimme in thy loue. Let me be poſſeſſed by loue, mounting aboue my ſelfe, with exceſſiue feruour, and admiration. Let me follow thee on high my beloued, let my ſoule faint in thy praiſes reioycing with loue. Let me loue thee more then my ſelfe, and not my ſelfe but for thee, and all in thee, that truly loue thee, as the law of loue commandes which shines in thee.

7. Loue is ſwift, ſincere, pious, ſweet and delightfull: ſtronge patient, faithfull, prudent, ſuffering, full of courage, and ne-

uer ſeeking it ſelfe. For where one ſeekes himſelfe, there he falles from loue. Loue is circumſpect, humble, and vpright: not remiſſe, not murable, nor attēding to vaine things: ſober, chaſt, conſtant, quiet, and guarded in all the ſenſes Loue is ſubiect, and obedient to Superiours, meane and abiect to it ſelfe, deuout and thankfull to God, truſting and hoping alwaies in him, euen then, when God impartes no ſweetnes vnto it: for without ſorrow, none liues in loue.

8. He that is not ready to ſuffer all thinges, and ſtand to the willof his beloued, is not worthy to be called a louer. A louer ought to ſuffer all that is harde and diſtaſtfull, for his beloued; and not to turne away from him, for any contrarie accidents.

CHAPT. VI.

Of the proofe of a true Louer.

SOnne, thou art not yet a ſtrong & prudent louer, Wherfore Lord? Becauſe thou giueſt ouer for a ſmall aduerſity, and too earneſtly ſeekeſt comfort. A conſtant louer ſtandes firmely in temptations, and giues not credit to the crafty perſuaſions of the enemy. As I pleaſe him in proſperity, ſo am I not vnpleaſant to him in aduerſity.

2. A prudent louer, conſideres not ſo much the guift of his louer, as the loue of the giuer. He rather eſteemes the good will, then the value, and places all guifts vnder his beloued. A noble louer reſtes not in the

gift, bnt in me aboue any gift. All therfore is not loſt if ſometimes thou haſt leſſe taſt of me and my Saints then thou wouldeſt. That good and ſweete deſire which thou ſometimes feeleſt, is the effect of preſent grace, and a certaine taſt of the heauenlie Country: wheron thou muſt not rely too much, for it goes and commes. But to fight againſt euill motions of the mind which may happen vnto thee, and to deſpiſe the ſuggeſtion of the diuell, is a ſigne of vertue & great merit.

3. Let not therefore ſtrange fancies forced into thee, of any matter whatſoeuer, trouble thee. Retaine a firme purpoſe and an vpright intention to God. Neither is it an illuſion that ſometimes thou art ſuddainly rapt on high, and preſently returneſt againe to the

accuſtomed vanities of thy hart. For thou doſt rather vnwillingly ſuffer them, thē commit thē: and as longe as they diſpleaſe thee, and thou ſtriueſt againſt them, it is a merit, and no loſſe.

4. Know that thy ancient enemy, doth euer ſtriue to hinder thy deſire to good, and to diuert thee from all deuout exerciſe: to wit, from the worshiping of Saints, from the deuout memorie of my paſſion, from the profitable remembrance of thy ſinnes, from the guard of thine owne hart, & from the firme purpoſe of profiting in vertue He thruſtes many euill thoughtes into thy mind, that he may cauſe a weariſomnes, and horrour in thee, to draw thee frō deuout prayer and reading. Humble confeſſion is diſpleaſing to him, & if he could, he would cauſe thee

to ceaſe from receauing the Sacrement of my Body. Truſt him not, nor care for him, although he should often ſet ſnares of deceipt to intrap thee. Charge him with it, when he ſuggeſtes euill, & vnclean thoughts vnto thee. Say vnto him: Auant filthy ſpirit, bushe miſerable wretch, thou art filthy that bringeſt ſuch things vnto mine eares. Away frō me wicked deceauer thou shalt haue no part in me: but Ieſus shal be with me as a ſtrong warrier, and thou shalt remaine confunded. I had rather die & vndergo any torment, then conſent to thee. Hold thy peace & be ſilent I will hear thee no more, though thou shouldeſt worke me many troubles. My Lord is my light and ſaluation, whom shall I feare? If whole armies should ſtand together againſt

me, my hart shal not feare. Our Lord is my helper, and my Redeemer.

5. Fight like a good souldier: & if thou somtimes fal through frailty, recouer greater forces then before, trusting in my more aboundant grace: and take great heede of vaine complacence and pride. This brings manie into errour, and makes them sometimes fal into almost incurable blindnes. Let the fall of the proud, foolishly presuminge of themselues, serue thee for a warning, and a perpetuall humiliation.

CHAPT. VII.

That grace is to be hid vnder the veil of Humility.

SOnne, it is more profitable, and safe for thee to hide the

grace of deuotion, not to extoll thy ſelfe, nor to ſpeake much, nor to eſteeme much thereof: but rather to deſpiſe thy ſelfe, and feare it, as giuen to one vnworthy thereof. This affection is not to be cleaued vnto, which may be quickly changed into the cõtrary. Thinke when thou art in grace, how miſerable and needie thou art wont to be without it. Nether doth therin only conſiſt the profit of ſpirituall life, when thou haſt the grace of comfort; but when thou humbly, reſignedly, and patiently ſuffereſt the withdrawing therof: ſo that thou be not then leſſe diligent in the exerciſe of prayer, nor ſuffer thy ſelfe to paſſe ouer the reſt of thy accuſtomed good works: but that thou willingly performe what lies in thee, according as thou art able & vnder-

ſtandeſt to be fit: not neglecting thy ſelfe wholy for the drineſſe, and trouble of mind, which thou feeleſt.

2. There are many that when things ſuccede not well with them, preſently they become impatiēt or ſlouthfull. The way of man is not alwaies in his power, but it belonges to God, to giue, and to comfort when he wil, how much he will, and whom he wil, as it shall pl. aſe him, and no more. Some vnadviſed perſons haue ouerthrown themſeluesfor the greedy deſire they had of the grace of deuotion, attemptinge more then they were able to performe, not waighing the meaſure of their weakenes, but following rather the deſire of their hart then the iudgment of reaſon. And becauſe they preſumed on greater matters then was plea-

fing to God, they quickly loſt his grace. They who builſt themſelues neſts in heauen, were made needy, and left in a deiected eſtate, to the end that being humbled, and impouerished, they might learne not to fly with their owne winges, but to liue in hope vnder my feathers. They that are yet new, and vnacquainted in the way of our Lord, vnles they gouerne themſelues by the counſaile of diſcret perſons: may eaſily be deceaued and ouerthrowne.

3. And if they will rather follow their owne iudgment, then giue credit to others that are experienced, their ende will be dangerous, if they cannot be drawn from their owne conceipt. Seldome thoſe that are wiſe in their owne opinion, ſuffer themſelues humbly to be gouerned by others. A little

knowledge with humilitie, and a ſlender vnderſtandinge, is better then greate treaſures of learning with a vaine ſelfe-likinge. It is better for thee to haue leſſe, then much, of that wherof thou maiſt be proud. He doth not ſo diſcreetly, that wholy giues himſelfe ouer to mirth, forgetting his former pouerty, & the chaſt feare of God, which feares to looſe the grace which he hath obteyned. Nether is he vertuouſly wiſe, that in time of aduerſity or any tribulation whatſoeuer, yeildes to deſpairing thoughts, and thinkes and imagines of me leſſe confidently then he ought.

4. He that will be ouer ſecure in time of peace, shall be often found in time of warre too deiected and fearefull: If thou couldeſt alwaies continue humble,

humble, and lowly within thy ſelfe, and temper, and gouerne thy ſoule wel, thou shouldeſt not ſo ſoone fall into danger and offence. It is good counſel, that when thou conceaueſt feruour of ſpirit, thou shouldeſt thinke what will become of thee, when that light shall leaue thee. And when that doth happen, remember the light may returne againe, which for thy inſtruction and my gloire, I haue withdrawne for a time.

5. Such proofe is often more profitable, then if thou shouldeſt alwaies enioy proſperitie according to thy deſire. For merits are not to be waighed in a man by the number of viſions and comfort which he hath, or by his knowledge in Scriptures, or by his being placed in high degree: but in that he is grounded in true humili-

ty, and replenished with diuine charity: if he alwaies purely and entirely seeke the honour of God, if he esteeme himselfe nothing, and with a sincere hart despise himselfe, & reioyce mote to be despised & humbled by others, then to be honored.

CHAPT. VIII.

Of a meane conceipt of our selues in the sight of God.

SHall I speake vnto my Lord, sith I am dust and ashes? If I esteeme better of my selfe, behold thou standest against me, & my iniquities beare true witnes: nether can I speake against it. But if I abase and esteeme nothing of my selfe, and cast of all selfe-conceipt, and (as I am) ac-

compt my ſelfe to be duſt, thy grace will be fauourable vnto me, and thy light will be neere vnto my hart: and all eſtimation how little ſoeuer, shal be ſwallowed vp in the depth of my nothing, and perish euerlaſtingly. There thou shewest my ſelfe vnto me, what I am, what I haue bene, and whither I am come: for alas I am nothing: & I knew it not. And if be left to my ſelf, behold I become nothing, and a maſſe of infirmity. But if thou ſuddainly looke vpon me, I am preſently made ſtronge and filled with new ioy And it is a great meruaile, that I am ſo ſuddainly lifted vp, & ſo graciouſly imbraced by thee, that of mine owne waight, I allwaies ſinke downeward.

2. Thy loue is cauſe hereof, freely preuēting me, and relee-

uing me in ſo many neceſſities, preſeruinge me alſo from grieuous dãgers, and (as I may truely ſay) deliuering me from innumerable euills. For ſurely by euil louing my ſelf, I loſt my ſelfe: and by ſeeking thee alone, & ſincerely louing thee, I haue found both my ſelf & thee, and for thy loue haue more deeply brought my ſelfe to nothing. For, that thou, O moſt ſweet Ieſu, dealeſt with me aboue all deſert, and aboue all that I dare hope and requeſt.

3. Bleſſed be thou my God; for although I be vnworthy of all good, yet the noblenes of thy bounty & thy infinite goodnes, neuer ceaſes to do good euen to the vngratefull, and to them that be turned away far from thee, Turne vs vnto thee O Lord that we may be gratefull, humble, & deuout:

for thou art our safety, our power, and our strength.

CHAPT. IX.

That all thinges are to be referred vnto God as vnto the last end.

SOnne I ought to be thy chiefest and last end, if thou desirest to be truly blessed. With this intention thy affection shall be purified, which is oftentimes inclined inordinately to it selfe, and vnto creatures. For if in any thing thou seekest thy selfe thou presently faintest and driest vp within thy selfe. Direct therfore all thinges chiefly vnto me, for I am he that haue giuen all. Consider euery thinge as flowing frō the highest good,

and therfore all things are to be reduced vnto me as vnto their firſt beginninge.

2. Out of me, as out of liuing fountaines, the litle & the great, the poore and the rich, do draw the water of life: and they that willingly, and freely ſerue me, ſhall receaue grace for grace. But he that will glory out of me, or be delighted in any particuler good, ſhal not be grounded in true ioy, nor enlarged in his hart, but ſhal be many waies hindred & ſtraitned. Thou oughteſt therfore to aſcribe no good vnto thy ſelfe, nor attribute the praiſe of vertue vnto any man, but giue all vnto God, without whom man hath nothing I haue beſtowed all, and will that all be returned to me againe: and with great ſeuerity I require thanks.

3. This is the truth, that puttes

to flight vaine glory. And if heauenly grace, and true charitie enter in, there shall be no enuy nor grudging of hart, neither shall there be any place for selfe loue. For diuine charity ouercommes all, and enlarges all the forces of the soule. If thou vnderstād aright, in me alone thou wilt reioyce, in me alone thou wilt hope: for none is good, but God alone, who is to be praised aboue all thinges, and to be blessed in all.

CHAPT. X.

That despising the world, it is sweet to serue God.

NOw I will speake againe o Lord, & will not be silent. I wil say in the eares of

my God, my Lord, and my Kinge that is on high, O how great is the multitude of thy ſweetnes o Lord, which thou haſt hidden for thoſe that feare thee! But what art thou to them that loue thee? What to them that ſerue thee with their whole hart? Truely vnſpeakable is the ſweetnes of thy contemplation, which thou beſtoweſt on them that loue thee. In this chiefly thou haſt shewed me the ſweetnes of thy charity, for that when I was not, thou madeſt me, & when I went aſtray far off from thee, thou broughteſt me back againe, that I might ſerue thee: and haſt commanded me to loue thee.

2. O fountaine of euerlaſting loue, what shall I ſay of thee? How can I forget thee, that haſt vouchſafed to remember

me, euen when I withered away and perished! Thou hast vsed mercy with thy seruant beyond all the expectation of my hart: and hast bestowed thy grace and friēdship beyōd all merit. What shal I returne vnto thee for this grace? For it is not graunted to euerie one to forsake all thinges, to renounce the world, and to vndertake a solitarie life (*Monastică vitā.*) Is it much that I serue thee, whō al creatures are bound to serue? It ought not to seeme much vnto me to serue thee: but this rather seemeth much, and meruailous vnto me, that thou vouchsafest to receaue into thy seruice one so poore ād vnworthy, and to ioyne him with thy beloued seruants.

3. Behold all is thine which I haue, and wherby I serue thee. and yet in very deed thou rather

ſerueſt me, then I thee. Behold heauen & earth, which thou haſt created for the ſeruice of man are ready at hand, and do dayly performe whatſoeuer thou doſt conmand; & this is litle: yea thou haſt alſo appointed the Angels to the ſeruice of man. But that which exceedeth all, is, that thou thy ſelfe haſt vouchſafed to ſerue man, and promiſed to giue thy ſelfe vnto him.

4. What shall I giue thee for all theſe thouſands of benefits? I would I could ſerue thee all the dayes of my life! I would I were able, at leaſt for one day, to doe thee ſome worthy and acceptable ſeruice! Thou art truly worthy of all ſeruice, of all honour, and euerlaſting praiſe. Thou art my Lord, & I thy poore ſeruant, that am bound to ſerue thee with all

my forces, neither ought I euer to ceaſe to praiſe thee. And this I wish to doe, this I deſire: and whatſoeuer is wanting vnto me, vouchſafe I beſeech thee to ſupply.

5. It is a great honour, a verie great glory to ſerue thee, and to deſpiſe all thinges for thee. For great grace shall be giuen to them, that shal willingly ſubiect themſelues vnto thy moſt holy ſeruice. They shall receaue moſt ſweet comfort of the holy Ghoſt, that for thy loue shall renounce all carnall delightes. They shall attaine great freedome of mind, that for thy names ſake shall enter into the narrow way, and shall haue left of all care of this world.

6. O ſweete and delightfull ſeruitude of God, by which man is truly made free and holy? O

ſacred ſtate of religious bondage, which makes man equall to Angels, pleaſinge to God, terrible to diuels, and gratefull, and of great eſteeme to all the faithfull: O ſeruice to be imbraced, & alwaies wished for, by which we obtaine the greateſt good, and attaine to that ioy which neuer shall haue end!

CHAPT. XI.

That the deſires of our hart are to be examined and moderated.

SOnne, thou oughteſt to learne many thinges more, which thou haſt not yet well learned. What are thoſe Lord? That thou frame thy deſire wholy according to my plea-

ſure: and be not a louer of thy ſelfe but a diligent follower of my will Thy deſires oftentimes do ſtir thee vp, and driue thee forwards with violence: but conſider whether thou art rather moued for my honour, or for thine owne profit. If I be the cauſe, thou wilt be well content with whatſoeuer I shall ordaine: but if there lurke in thee any ſelfe inclination, beholde this is it that hindres thee, and wayghes thee downe.

2. Beware therefore thou incline not too much vpon any deſire that comes to thy minde, before thou aske my counſell, leaſt perhaps afterwardes it repent thee, and that thou beginne now to diſlike that which before did pleaſe thee, and which thou earneſtly deſiredſt as the beſt. For euery affection that ſeemes good, is

not presently to be followed: nor euery contrary affection, at the first to be fled. It is expedient sometimes to vse a restraint euen in good desires and endeauours, least by importunity thou incur distraction of minde, and by euill example become a scandall vnto others: or beinge gainsaid by others, thou be suddainly troubled and fall.

3. Yet sometimes thou oughtest to vse violence, & manfully resiste thy sensual appetites, & respect not what thy body would, or would not: but rather labour, that euen perforce it be subiect to the spirit. And it is still to be chasticed and to be forced vnder seruitude till it readily obey in all thinges, and learne to be content with a *litle*, and to be pleased with ordinary things, and

not to murmure against any inconuenience.

CHAPT. XII.

Of the effect of Patience, and of strife against Concupiscence.

LOrd God, I perceaue patience is very necessary for me, because many aduersities do happen in this life. Howsoeuer I dispose of my peace, my life cannot be without warre and affliction. So it is Sonne. And my will is not, that thou seeke after that peace which is voyd of temptations, or that feeles no contrarieties; but then thinke that thou hast found peace when thou art exercised in sundry tribulations, and tried in many aduersities.

2. If thou ſay that thou art not able to ſuffer much, how then wilt thou endure the fire of Purgatory? Of two euils, the leſſe is alwaies to be choſen. That thou maiſt therfore auoid euerlaſting punishments in the next world, endeauour to ſuffer the preſent euils of this patiētly for Gods ſake. Doſt thou thinke that men of this world ſuffer little or nothing? Thou art deceaued. Looke into the life euen of them that liue in greateſt delicacies, and thou shalt find it otherwiſe. But thou wilt ſay they haue many delights, and follow their owne wils, & therfore they make ſmall accompt of their tribulations. Be it ſo, that they haue whatſoeuer they will; but how long doſt thou thinke it wil laſt?

3. Behold the wealthy of this word vanish away like ſmoke, and

and there shal be no memory of their ioyes past. Yea euē while they liue also, they rest not in them without griefe, irksomnesse, and feare, For the selfe same thinge in which they take their delight, is oftentimes the cause of their sorrow and great affliction. They haue their desert, who for that they immoderately seeke and follow delights, they do not obtaine them, but with shame and sorrow.

4. O how short and deceiptful, how inordinate and filthy are those pleasures? Yea so sensseles & blind are men that they vnderstand it not: but like dumbe beasts, for a litle pleasure of a corruptible life, they incur the eternall death of their soule. Do not thou therfore, my Sonne, follow the disordinate inclination of thy corrupt

nature, but forſake thine owne wil. Delight in our Lord and he wil giue thee the deſires of thy hart.

5. If thou deſire true delight, and to be more plentifully comforted by me, behold, in the contempt of all wordly things, and in the cuttinge off baſe delights, shal be thy bleſſings; and aboundant comforts shall be giuen thee. And how much the more thou withdraweſt thy ſelfe from all comfort of creatures, ſo much the ſweeter and more forcible conſolations shalt thou find in me. But at firſt thou canſt not attaine vnto them without a certaine griefe, labour, and ſtrife. The olde cuſtome will make reſiſtance, & thou muſt ouercome it with another cuſtome that is better. Thy fleſh will murmure but thou muſt bridle it

with feruour of ſpirit. The olde ſerpent will ſting and trouble thee, but bv praier he shall be put to flight: and with profitable labour thou shalt shut the dore againſt him.

CHAPT. XIII.

Of the humble obedience of a ſubiect according to the example of Christ.

SOnne, he that endeauours to withdraw himſelfe from obedience, withdrawes himſelf from grace. And he that ſeekes to haue thinges in priuate, shall looſe the common. When one doth not willingly and freely ſubmit himſelf to his Superiour, it is a ſigne that his flesh is not yet perfectly obedient to him, but oftentimes rebelles & mur-

mures againſt him. Learne therfore readily to ſubmit thy ſelfe to thy Superiour, if thou deſireſt to ſubdue thy paſſions. For the outward enemy is ſooner ouercome, if the inward man be in good eſtate. There is no worſe enemy, nor more troubleſome to the ſoule, then thou art to thy ſelfe, not agreeing well with the ſpirit. Thou muſt of neceſſity haue a true contempt of thy ſelf, if thou wilt preuaile againſt fleſh and bloud.

2. Becauſe thou loueſt thy ſelfe as yet too inordinatly, therfore thou art afraide to reſigne thy ſelfe wholy to the wil of others. But what greate matter is it, if thou that art duſt, and nothing, ſubmitteſt thy ſelfe to a man for God, when I the Almighty and higheſt Soueraigne, who created

all things of nothing, humbly ſubmitted my ſelf vnto man for thee? I became the moſt humble and abiect of all men, that thou mighteſt ouercome thy pride with my humility. Learne to obey thou that art duſt. Learne to humble thy ſelfe thou earth and clay, and put thy ſelf vnder the feet of all men. Learne to breake thine owne will, and to yeilde thy ſelfe to all ſubiection.

3. Take courage againſt thy ſelfe, and ſuffer not pride to liue in thee: but humble and ſubmit thy ſelf to al, that euery one may goe ouer thee, and tread thee as durt of the ſtreets vnder their feete. Vaine man, what canſt thou complaine of? what cãſt thou anſwere, foule ſinner, to them that reproue thee, who haſt ſo often offended God, & ſo many times deſerued hell?

But mine eyes hath ſpared thee, becauſe thy ſoule was pretious in my ſight, that thou mighteſt know my loue, and alwaies remaine grateful for my benefits: that thou mighteſt continually giue thy ſelfe to true ſubiection and humility, and beare patiently the contempt of thy ſe fe.

CHAPT. XIV.

Of the ſecret Iudgment of God to be conſidered, leaſt we be extolled in our good deeds.

THou thundreſt thy iudgements ouer me, ô Lord, and ſhakeſt all my bones with feare and trembling: my ſoule is ſore afraid. I ſtand aſtoniſhed, & conſider, that the

heauens are not pure in thy ſight. If thou haſte found wickednes in Angels, and haſt not pardoned them, what ſhall become of me? Stars fell from heauen, and what do I preſume that am duſt? They whoſe works ſeemed laudable, fell into the loweſt: and I haue ſeene them, that did eate bread of Angels, delighted with the huskes of ſwyne.

2 There is no ſanctity, if thou ô Lord, withdraweſt thy hand, No wiſedome auailes, if thou ceaſeſt to gouerne. No ſtrength helpes, if thou leaueſt to defend No chaſtity ſecure, if thou doeſt not protect it No cuſtody of our owne profitable, if thy ſacred watchfulnes be not preſent. For if thou leaueſt vs, we ſinke, and perish: but if thou vouchſafeſt to viſit vs, we are raiſed vp, and do enioy life. We

are inconſtant, but by thee we are ſtrenghtned: we waxe cold, but by thee we receaue heate.

3. O how meanely and baſely ought I to thinke of my ſelf! how little, yea nothing ought I to eſteeme it, if I ſeeme to haue any good! O Lord, how ought I to ſubmit my ſelfe vnder thy vnſearchable Iudgments? wher I find my ſelfe to be nothing els, but nothing, and nothing! O vnmeaſurable waight! ô ſea that can neuer be paſſed ouer, where I find my ſelf only and wholy nothing! Where then is the lurking hole of glory? Wher is the confidence conceaued of vertue? Al vayne glory is ſwallowed vp in the depth of thy Iudgments, which hang ouer my head.

4. What is all flesh in thy ſight? Shall clay glory againſt him that frames it? How can it

be lifted vp with vaine wordes, whoſe hart is truly ſubiect to God? All the world cannot moue him to any elation of mind, whom truth hath ſubiected to it; nether shal he be moued with the tongues of al his praiſers, that hath ſetled his whole hope in God. For they alſo that ſpeak, behold, are nothing: they shall paſſe away with the ſound of the wordes: but the truth of our Lord remaines for euer.

CHAPT. XV.

What we ought to do, and ſay, in euery thing which we deſire.

SOnne, ſay thus in euery thing: Lord, if it be pleaſing to thee, let this be donne in

this ſort. Lord if it be to thy honour, let this be done in thy name. Lord if thou ſeeſt it expedient for me, and alloweſt it to be profitable, then graunt, that I may vſe this to thine honour. But if thou knoweſt it wil be hurtful to me, & not profitable to the health of my ſoule, take from me al ſuch deſire. For euery deſire, procedes not from the holy Ghoſt, though it ſeeme to man right & good. It is hard to iudg whether a good ſpirit, or the contrary, driue thee to deſire this or that: or whether alſo by thine own ſpirit thou be moued therunto. Many are deceaued in the end, who at the firſt ſeemed to be led by a a good ſpirit.

2. Whatſoeuer therfor occurres to the mind to be deſired, muſt be deſired with the feare of God, and humility of hart:

and aboue al, thou muſt commit it to me with full reſignation of thy ſelfe: and ſay: Lord thou knoweſt what is beſt, do this, or that, as thou pleaſeſt. Giue what thou wilt, and how much thou wilt and when thou wilt. Do with me as thou knoweſt, and as beſt pleaſes thee, and is moſt for thy honour. Set me where thou wilt, and deale with me in al things according to thy will. I am in thy hand, turne me againe which way ſoeuer thou pleaſe. Behold I am thy ſeruant, ready to obey thee in all things: for I deſire not to liue to my ſelfe, but to thee: and would to God it might be in ſome worthy and perfect manner.

A prayer for the fulfilling of the will of God.

3. Graunt me thy grace ſweet Ieſus, that it may be with me, and labour with me, and perſeuere with me till the end. Graunt me alwaies to deſire and will, that which is moſt acceptable to thee, and beſt pleaſes thee. Let thy will be mine, and let my will euer follow thine, and agree perfectly with it. Let my will and nill be all one with thine: and let me not be able to will, or refuſe any thing, but what thou wilt, or reiecteſt.

4. Graunt that I may die to all things that are in the world, and to loue for thy ſake to be contemned, and not to be knowne in this world. Graunt that I may reſt in thee, and that

my hart may enioy peace in thee aboue all things that can be desired. Thou art the true peace of the hart, thou art the only rest: out of thee all thinges are troublesome & vnquiet. In peace in the selfe same: that is, in thee, our chiefest eternal good, I will sleep and rest. Amen.

CHAPT. XVI.

That true comfort is to be sought in God alone.

WHatsoeuer I can desire, or imagine for my comfort, I looke not for in this life, but hereafter. For if I should alone haue all the comfortes of the world, and might enioy all the delights therof, it is certaine that they could not longe en-

dure. Wherfore my ſoule, thou canſt not be fully comforted, nor haue perfect delight, but in God, the comforter of the humble. Expect a while my ſoule, expect the diuine promiſe, and thou ſhalt haue aboundãce of all good thinges in heauen. If thou deſire inordinatly the things that are preſent, thou ſhalt looſe the celeſtiall and eternall. Vſe temporall, and deſire eternall things. Thou canſt not be filled with any temporall goods, becauſe thou art not created to enioy them..

2. Although thou didſt enioy all that is created: yet cãſt thou not be happy therby nor bleſſed, but thy Whole beatitude and happines cõſiſtes in God who hath created all things; not ſuch as is ſeene, and cõmended, by the foolish louers of the world, but

ſuch as the good faithfull ſeruants of Chriſt expect, and the ſpirituall, and cleane of hart, whoſe conuerſation is in heauen, ſometimes take a taſte of. Vaine and short is all human comfort. Bleſſed and true is the comfort which is receaued inwardly from truth. A deuout man euery where caries with him Ieſus his comforter, and ſaith vnto him: Be preſent with me, Lord Ieſus, in euery place, and time. Let this be my comfort to be alwaies willing to want all humane comfort. And if thy comfort be wanting, let thy will and iuſt proofe be as the greateſt comfort to me: for thou wilt not be angry alwaies, nether wilt thou threaten for euer.

CHAPT. XVII.

That all our care is to be placed in God.

SOnne, ſuffer me to do with thee what I pleaſe. I know what is expedient for thee. Thou thinkeſt as man; thou iudgeſt in many things as humane affection perſwades thee. Lord, what thou ſaieſt is true. Thy ſolicitude for me is greater then all the care that I can take for my ſelfe. For he ſtades at too great a hazard, that caſtes not his whole care vpon thee. Lord, ſo that my will may remaine right & firme in thee, do with me whatſoeuer it ſhall pleaſe thee. For whatſoeuer thou doſt with me cannot be but good.

2. If

2. If it be thy will I should be in darknes, be thou blessed; and if it be thy will I should be in light, be thou againe blessed: If thou vouchsafest to comfort me, be thou blessed: and if thou wilt afflict me, be thou also euer equally blessed. Sonne so thou oughtest to stand if thou desirest to walke with me. Thou oughtest be as ready to suffer, as to receaue ioy. Thou oughtest to be as willing to be poore and needy, as plentifull and rich.

3. Lord, I will willingly suffer for thee, whatsoeuer thy pleasure is shal befall me. I will receaue indifferently from thy hand, good and euill, sweet and sower, delightful and sorrowfull: and giue thee thanks for all that happenes to me. Keep me from all sinne, and I will neither feare death, nor hell: so as

thou doſt not for euer caſt me from thee, and blot me out of the booke of life, what tribulation ſoeuer befall me, it ſhall not hurt me.

CHAPT. XVIII.

That temporall miſeries, by the example of Chriſt, are to be borne patiently.

SOnne, I deſcended from Heauen for thy health: I tooke vpon me thy miſeries, my charity and not any neceſſity drawing me therunto, that thou mightſt learne patience, & not refuſe to beare temporall miſeries. For from the houre of my birth, vntill my death on the Croſſe, I was not without ſuffering of griefe. I ſuffered great want of temporal things,

I often heard many complainss againſt me: I bare patiently shame & reproches: for benefits receaued ingratitude, for miracles, blaſphemies; for heauenly doctrine, reprehenſions.

2. Lord, for that thou wert patient in thy life time, chiefly in fulfilling the commandment of thy Father, it is reaſon that I miſerable ſinner should haue patience in all thinges accordinge to thy will, and for myne owne health, beare the burthen of this corruptible life, as long as thou wilt. For although this preſent life be burdenſome, yet notwithſtanding it is now by thy grace, made very meritorious: and by the example & the footſteps of thy Saints, more plaine and tolerable to the weak. Yea, much more comfortable alſo, then it was

in times paſt in the old law, when the gates of heauen remained shut: and the way alſo to heauen ſeemed darker, when ſo few tooke care to ſeeke after thy Kingdome Neither they alſo that then were iuſt, & were ordained to be ſaued, could enter into the heauenly glory before thy paſſion, and the debt of thy ſacred death was diſcharged.

3. O how great thanks am I bound to giue thee, that thou haſt vouchſafed to shew vnto me, and to all faithful ſoules a direct, and ſure way to thy euerlaſting Kingdome! For thy life is our way, and by holy patience we goe vnto thee that art our Crowne. If thou hadſt not gone before vs and taught vs, who would haue taken care to follow? Alas how many would ſtay behind, and re-

maine far off, if they beheld not thy excellent examples! Behold we are yet colde although we haue heard of so many of thy wonders, and thy heauenly documents, what would become of vs, if we had not so greate light to follow thee?

CHAPT. XIX.

Of suffering of iniuries: and who is proued to be truly patient.

WHat is it thou saist, Sonne? Cease to complaine, considering my passion, and that of my other Saints. Thou hast not yet made resistance to the shedding of bloud. It is but litle thou sufferest, in comparison of them that haue suffered so much, so strongly tempted, so

grieuouſly afflicted, ſo many waies tried and exerciſed, Thou oughteſt therfore to call to minde the heauier ſufferinges of others, that thou maiſt the eaſier beare the little aduerſities which thou ſuffereſt. And if they ſeeme not little, beware leaſt thy patience be cauſe therof. Yet whether they be little, or great, endeauour to beare all patiently.

2. How much the better thou diſpoſeſt thy ſelfe to ſuffering, ſo much the more wiſely thou doſt, & ſo much the more doſt thou merit: thou ſhalt more eaſily alſo endure it, if thy mind be prepared, and thy ſelfe accuſtomed therunto. Do not ſay, I cannot ſuffer theſe things of ſuch a one, at the hands of ſuch a perſon, nor ſuch thinges are not to be ſuffered by me, for he hath done me great wronge

and vpbraided me with thoſe thinges which I neuer thought of: but of another I will willingly ſuffer, and as I shall ſee cauſe. Such a thought is foolish, it conſideres not the vertue of patience, nor by whom it shall be crowned, but rather waighes the perſons, and the iniuries offered.

5. He is not truly patient, that will not ſuffer but as much as he thinkes goods, and by whom he liſtes. But he that is indeede patient, mindes not by whom he is exerciſed, whether by his Superiour, or ſome of his equals, or by his inferiours: whether by a good and holy man, or by a peruerſe and vnworthy perſon. But indifferently frõ all creatures, how much ſoeuer, or how often ſoeuer any aduerſity happenes vnto him, he takes all thainkfully

as from the hands of God, & eſteemes it a great gaine: for that nothing before God, how little ſoeuer, ſo it be ſuffered for God, can be without merit.

4. Be thou therfore alwaies prepared for the fight, if thou wilt haue the victory. Without combat thou canſt not attaine vnto the Crowne of patience. If thou wilt not ſuffer, thou refuſeſt to be crowned, fight manfully, and endure patiently. Without labour, there is no comming to reſt: nor without fight, can the victory be obtained. Lord lett that be made poſſible to me by thy grace, which ſeemes impoſſible to me by nature. Thou knoweſt that I can ſuffer little, and that I am quickly diſmayed. When a ſmall aduerſity ariſes. Let all exerciſe of tribulation be made pleaſing vnto me, and be wellcome for

thy name: for to ſuffer, and to be troubled for thee, is very profitable for my ſoule.

CHAPT. XX.

Of the acknowledging of our owne enfirmity: and of if the miſeries of this life.

I will confeſſe againſt me my iniuſtice: I will confeſſe vnto thee ô Lord my infirmity. Oftentimes it is a ſmall matter that diſcomfortes, & grieues me. I purpoſe to reſiſt with courage, but when a ſmall temptation commes, it bringes me into very narrow ſtraits. It is ſomtimes a very trifle, from whence great temptations doe proceed. And whileſt I thinke my ſelfe ſomwhat ſafe, when I leaſt expect it, I find my ſelfe

ſomtimes ouercome with a ſmall blaſt.

2. Behold therfore Lord, my humility & my frailty euery way knowne vnto thee. Haue mercy on me and deliuer me out of the mire of my infirmities, that I ſticke not faſt therin: let me not for euer remaine deiected. This is that which oftentimes beares me backe, & confoundes me in thy ſight, for that I am ſo ſubiect to fall, & weake in reſiſting of my paſſions. And though I do not altogether conſent, yet their continuall aſſaults are troubleſome, and grieuous vnto me: and it is tedious, and a very irkſome thing to liue thus daily in ſtrife. Hereby my infirmity is made knowne to me for that wicked fancies doe alwaies much more eaſily enter in vpon me, then they can be caſt out againe.

3. O mighty God of Israel, the zealous louer of faithfull soules; let it please thee to consider the labour & sorrow of thy seruant, and assist him in all whatsoeuer he vndertakes. Strengthen me with heauenly force, least my old man, my miserable flesh, not fullie as yet subiect to the spirit, preuaile and get the vpper hand: against which I ought to fight, as long as I breath in this miserable life Alas, what a kinde of life is this, where tribulations and miseries are neuer wanting! where all is set with enemies! All is compassed with enemies! For when one tribulation or temptation goes away, another commes, yea and during the first conflict also, many others come vnlooked for one after another.

4. And how can a life be

loued, that hath ſo many afflictions, and is ſubiect to ſo many calamities and miſeries? How is it called a life, that begettes ſo many deaths, and plagues? And yet it is loued, & many ſeek to delight themſelues therin. The world is oftentimes blamed, that it is deceiptfull and vaine, and yet it is not eaſily forſaken, becauſe the inclinations of our flesh do too much ouer-rule vs. Some things draw vs to loue it, others to cotemne it. The concupiſcence of the flesh, The concupiſcence of the eyes, and pride of life, do draw vs to the loue of the world: but the paines and miſeries that do iuſtly follow them, cauſes a hatred and loathſomnes therof.

5. But alas wicked pleaſure ouercommes the mind which is giuen ouer to the world, and

she esteemes it a delight to be euen vnder thornes, because she hath nether seene nor tasted the sweetnes of God, and the inward delight of vertue. But they that perfectly contemne the world, and endeauour to liue to God vnder holy discipline, are not ignorant of the diuine sweetnes, promised to the true forsakers of the world; and do more clearlie see how grieuously the world errs, and how it is many waies deceaued.

CHAPT. XXI.

That we are to rest in God aboue all his gifts.

ABoue all things, and in all things, my soule, thou shalt euer rest in God, for he is the

euerlaſting reſt of the Saints. Grant me moſt ſweete and louing Ieſu, to reſt in thee aboue all creatures, aboue all health and beauty, aboue all glory and honour, aboue all power and dignity, aboue all knowle ge & learning, aboue all riches and arts, aboue all ioy & gladnes, aboue al fame and praiſe, aboue all ſweetnes and comfort, aboue all hope and promiſe, aboue all merit and deſire, aboue all gifts and preſents that thou canſt giue and impatt vnto vs, aboue all ioy and iubily that the mind of man can receaue and feele; laſtly, aboue Angels & Archangels, & aboue all the heauenly Hoſts, aboue all viſible and inuiſible thinges, and aboue all that thou art not, my God.

2. For thou, my Lord God, ſurpaſſeſt all, thou alone moſt

high, thou alone moſt powerfull, thou alone moſt full and ſufficient, thou alone moſt ſweet, & comfortable, thou alone moſt beautifull, & louing, thou alone moſt noble and glorious aboue all things. in whom al good thinges together, both are perfectly, and euer haue beene and shalbe: and therefor it is too little and not ſufficient, whatſoeuer thou beſtoweſt on me beſids thy ſelf, or reuealeſt vnto me of thy ſelf, or promiſeſt, whileſt thou art not ſeene, and not fully obtained: for ſurely my hart cannot reſt, nor be fully contented vnleſſe it reſt in thee, and ſurmount all giftes and creatures whatſoeuer.

3. O my moſt beloued ſpouſe Chriſt Ieſus, the moſt chaſt louer, the gouuernour of all creatures, who will giue me

winges of true liberty to fly, & reſt in thee! O when shall it be fully granted me, to conſider in quietnes of mind, & ſee how ſweet thou art my Lord God! When shall I fully recollect my ſelf in thee, that for thy loue I may not feele my ſelf, but thee alone, aboue all ſenſe, and feelinge, in a manner not knowne vnto all, But now I oftentimes lament, & heare my infelicity with griefe, for that manie euils occur in this vaile of miſeries, which do often trouble, greeue, & darken me, often hinder and diſtract me, allure and intangle me, to the end I should not haue free acceſſe to thee, and that I should not enioy thoſe ſweet and heauenly imbracings which thou alwaies giueſt to the bleſſed & celeſtiall ſpirits. Let my ſighes and manifold deſolation on earth

earth moue thee.

4. O Ieſus, ſplendor of eternall glory, and comfort of the pilgrime ſoule, with thee is my tongue without voice, and my ſilence ſpeakes to thee. How long doth my Lord delay to come! Let him come vnto me his poore ſeruant, & make me glad. Let him put out his hand, and deliuer me, miſerable wretch, from all anguish. Come, come, bleſſed Lord, for without thee I shall haue, no ioyfull day, nor houre. Thou art my ioy, & without thee, there is nothinge but want. A wretched creature I am, and in a manner impriſonned, and loaden with irons, vntill thou cõforteſt me with the light of thy preſence, and giueſt me liberty, and sheweſt a fauourable countenance vnto me.

5. Let others ſeeke What they

pleaſe inſteede of thee, but for me nothing els doth, nor ſhall delight me, but thou only my God, my hope, my euerlaſtinge health. I will not hold my peace nor ceaſe to pray; vntill thy grace returne againe, and thou ſpeake inwardly vnto me. Behold I am here, behold I come vnto thee, becauſe thou haſt called vpon me. Thy teares, ād the deſire of thy ſoule, thy humility, & the cōtritiō of thy hart, haue inclined, ād brought me to thee. And I ſaid: Lord I haue called thee, and haue deſired to forſake al things for thee. For thou firſt haſt ſtirred me vp that I might ſeeke thee. Bleſſed be thou therfor, ô Lord, that haſt shewed this goodnes to thy ſeruant, according to the multitude of thy mercies.

6. What hath thy ſeruant more to ſay before thee, but

greatly to humble himselfe in thy sight, alwaies mindfull of his owne iniquity, and baseness? For there is none like to thee in all whatsoeuer is wonderful in heauen and earth. Thy words are good, thy iudgments true, and by thy prouidence al things are gouerned. Praise therfore & glory be vnto thee O wisdome of the eternall Father: let my tongue, my soule & al creatures together, praise, and blesse thee.

CHAPT. XXII.

Of the remembrance of the manifold benefits of God.

OPen, O Lord, my hart in thy Law, and teach me to walke in thy Commandements. Graunt me to vnderstand thy will, and to remember thy benefits, as well in generall, as in particuler, with great reuerence

and diligent consideration: that hence-forward I may be able worthily to giue thee thanks. But I know, and confesse, that I am not able to giue thee due thanks, for the fauours which thou bestowest vpon me, euen in the least moment. I am lesse then the least of thy benefits: & when I consider the excellency of thy Maiesty, the greatnes therof makes my spirit to faint.

2. Al that we haue in out soule & body, & whatsoeuer we possesse outwardly or inwardly, naturally or spiritually, are thy benefits, & do praise thee as bountiful, pious, & good, from whom we haue receaued all that is good, though one haue receaued more, another lesse, al notwithstanding are thine, and without thee eue̅ the least cannot be had. He that hath receaued greater, cannot glory

of his owne desert, nor extol himselfe aboue others, nor insult ouer the lesser, for he is greater & better that ascribes least to himselfe, and is more humble and deuout in rendring thanks. And he that esteemes himselfe baseſt of all men, and iudges himselfe most vnworthy, is fittest to receaue greater blessings.

3. And he that hath receaued fewer, ought not to be sory, nor beare it impatiently, nor enuy them that are enriched with greater store, but attend rather vnto thee, & chiefly praise thy goodnes, for that thou bestowest thy gifts so bountifully, so freely, and so willingly, without respect of persons. All things proceed from thee, and therfore in all thinges thou art to be praised. Thou knowest what is fit to be giuen to euery

one, and why this man hath leſſe, and he more, it is not ours, but thine to determine, who doſt waigh in iuſt meaſure the deſerts of euery one.

4. Wherfore my Lord God, I eſteeme it as a great benefit, not to haue much, wherby outwardlie & before men I might ſeeme worthy of praiſe and glory: ſo that he, who conſidereth his owne pouerty & baſenes, ought not therfore to conceaue griefe, or ſorrow, or to be therfore troubled, but rather to take great comfort, and to be glad for that thou, ô God, haſt choſen the poore and humble, and the deſpiſed of this world for thy ſelfe, and for thy iliſamar and domeſticall frieds. Witneſſes are thy Apoſtles themſelues, whom thou haſt appointed princes ouer al the earth. And yet they liued without complaint in the world, ſo

humble, simple, ād meane to the eyes of men, without all malice & deceipt, that they reioyced to receaue contumelies for thy name, & what the world abhorreth, they imbraced with great affection.

5. Nothing therfore ought so to reioyce him that loues thee, & acknowledges thy benefits, as the accomplishment of thy will in himselfe, and the pleasure of thy eternall appointment wherwith he ought to be so contented and comforted, that he would as willingly be the least, as any would wish to be the greatest: & as peaceable & content in the last, as in the first place: & as willingly to be despised & contemned, & to be of no esteeme or accompt, as to be preferred in honour before all others, and to be greater in the

world. For thy will & the loue of thy glory, ought to be preferred before all things: & to comfort him more, & pleaſe him better, then all the benefits which he hath receaued or can deſire.

CHAPT. XXIII.

Of foure thinges that bring much peace.

SOnne, now I will teach thee the way of peace, and true liberty. Do Lord, I beſeech thee, as thou ſaiſt, for I ſhall be very glad to heare it. Endeauour my Sonne to do rather the will of another, then thine owne. Euer chooſe rather to haue leſſe, then more. Alwaies ſeeke the loweſt place, & to be inferiour to euery one. Wiſh alwaies, & pray, that the will of God may be wholy fulfilled thee. Behold ſuch a man en-

treth into the limits of peace and moſt quiet reſt.

2. Lord, this thy short ſpeech containes much perfection. It is little in words, but ful in ſenſe, and abounda nt in fruit. For if it could exactly be kept by me, then should I not ſo easily be troubled. For as often as I feele my ſelfe vnquiet, and afflicted, I find that I haue ſtraied from this doctrine. But thou that canſt all things, & euer loueſt the good & profit of my ſoule, increaſe in me thy grace, that I may fulfill thy words and perfect mine onwe health.

A Prayer againſt euill thoughts.

3. My Lord God, be not far from me: my God haue regard to help me, for ſundry thoughts haue riſen vp againſt me, and great feares afflicting my ſoule. How ſhall I paſſe through thē

without hurt ? How shall I breake them? I, ſaith he, will go before thee, and will hũble the glorious of the earth. I will open the dores of the priſon, and reueale vnto thee hidden ſecrets. Do Lord as thou ſaieſt, and lett all euil thoughts fly from before thy face. This is my hope, and my only comfort to fly to thee in all tribulation, to truſt in thee, to call vpon thee from my hart, and to expect patiẽtly thy comfort.

A Prayer for enlightening of the minde.

4. Enligthen me, O good Ieſu, with the clearnes of inward light, and expell all darknes of my hart Repreſſe the many wauering thoughts, & beate down the fury of the temptations which violently aſſault me. Fight ſtrongly for me, and vanquish the euill beaſts, that

is, the alluring concupiſcences, that peace may be made in thy vertue, and abundance of thy praiſe ſound in thy holy court, which is a pure conſcience. Command the winds and tempeſts: ſay vnto the ſea, Be ſtill: and the north wind, blow not, and a great calme shal enſue.

5. Send forth thy light and thy truth, that they may shine vpon the earth, for I am empty and vnprofitable earth, vntill thou impartest thy light vnto me. Powre out thy grace from aboue, wash my hart with heauenly dew, giue waters of deuotion, to wash the face of the perfect fruit. Lift vp my mind, ouercharged with the waight of ſinne; draw vp my whole deſire to heauenly treaſures, that heauing taſted the ſweetnes of celeſtiall happines, it may loath me to thinke of earthly vanities.

6. Take me violently to thee, and deliuer me from al vnstable comfort of creatures: for no created thing can fully quiet & satisfy my desire. Ioyne me to thee with an vnspeakable band of loue: for thou only fillest the mind of him that loues thee, & without thee all things are vaine?

CHAPT. XXIV.

Of flying curious inquiry of the life of others.

SOnne, be not curious, trouble not thy selfe with idle cares. What is this or that to thee? Follow thou me. For what is it to thee whether that mãbe such or no, or whether this man do, or speake, this or that? Thou shalt not need to answere for others, but shalt giue accompt of thy selfe. Why therfore doest thou trouble thy selfe? Behold

I know euery one what he is, and doe ſee all thinges that are vnder the ſunne, and doe vnderſtand how it is with euerye one, what he thinkes, what he would, and at what his intention aymes. Al thinges therfore are to be committed vnto me: but doe thou keepe thy ſelfe in good peace, & ſuffer the vnquiet to do as they wil. What ſoeuer they shall haue done, or ſayd, shall fall vpon themſelues, for they cannot deceaue me.

2. Deſire not too great fame in this world, nor to be known to many, nor to haue the priuate loue of men: for theſe thinges breede diſtractions, and cauſe great darknes of hart. I would willingly vtter my wordes, and reueale my ſecrets to thee, if thou dideſt diligently obſerue my comming, and dideſt open the dore of thy hart to me. Be

carefull and watch in prayer, and humble thy ſelfe in all things.

CHAPT. XXV.

Wherin the firme peace of the hart and true profit doth conſiſt.

SOnne, I haue ſayd: Peace I leaue to you, my peace I giue to you: not as the world giues, doe I giue to you: All do deſire peace, but all care not for thoſe thinges that appertaine vnto peace. My peace is with the humble, and meeke of hart. Thy peace ſhall be in much patience. If thou wilt heare me and follow my voice, thou maiſt enioy much peace. What then ſhall I doe? In euery thing attend vnto thy ſelfe, what thou doſt, and what thou ſayeſt: and direct thy whole intention vnto this, that thou

maieſt pleaſe me alone, and deſire or ſeeke nothing out of me. Of the ſayings & doings of others, iudge nothing rashly: neither doe thou intangle thy ſelf with things not cõmitted vnto thee: and doing thus, it may be thou shalt be little or ſeldome troubled.

2. But neuer to feele any trouble at all, nor to ſuffer any griefe in hart or body, is not the ſtate of this life, but of euerlaſtinge reſt. Thinke not therfore, that thou haſt found true peace, if thou feeleſt no ſorrow, nor that then all is well, if thou haue no aduerſary: nor that it is perfection, that all thinges be done according to thy deſire. Nether do thou then eſteeme highly of thy ſelf, or imagine thy ſelfe to be eſpecially beloued; if thou be in great deuotion, and ſweetnes;

for in theſe things a true louer of vertue is not tried : nether doth the profit and perfection of man, conſiſt in hauing them.

3. Wherin then Lord? In offering thy ſelfe from the very bottome of thy hart, to the diuine ſeruice, not ſeeking thine owne intereſt, or commodity, nether in great nor litle things, nether in time nor eternity : ſo that with equall countenance, thou maiſt perſiſt in thanks giuing, both in proſperity & in aduerſity, waighing all things with an equal ballance. If thou be of ſuch courage ād ſo patiēt in hope, that when inward comfort is withdrawne from thee, thou prepare thy hart to greater matters, & not iuſtify thy ſelfe, as though thou oughteſt not to ſuffer theſe, and ſo igreat afflictions, but iuſtify me whatſoeuer I appoint, and praiſe

praiſe my holy name; then thou walkeſt in the true and right way of peace: & thou shalt haue vndoubted hope to ſee my face againe with great ioy. And if thou attaine to the full contempt of thy ſelfe, then shalt thou enioy as great aboũdance of peace, as thy banishment may permit.

CHAPT. XXVI.

Of the excellency of a free mind, which humble prayer better deſernes then reading.

LOrd, it is the work of a perfect man, neuer to ſlack his mind from the attẽtiue thought of heauenly things, & as it were to paſſe without care, through many cares: not faintingly, but with a certaine pri-

uiledge of a free mind, adhearinge by inordinate affection to no creature.

2. I beſeech thee moſt mercifull God, preſerue me from the cares of this life: leaſt I should be too much intangled therby: and from the many neceſſities of the body, leaſt I should be enthralled by pleaſure: from all hindrances of the ſoule, leaſt brokē with troubles I should be deiected and diſmayed. I meane not from thoſe things that wordly vanity ſo greatly deſires, but from thoſe miſeries, that as punishments, do weigh downe & hinder the ſoule of thy ſeruant, with the generall curſe of mortality, that it cannot enter into liberty of ſpirit, as often as it would.

3. O my God the vnſpeakable ſweetnes, make bitter vnto me all carnall comfort, which may

draw me away from the loue of euerlastinge happines, and wickedly allure me to it selfe, with the force of certaine present delights. Let not flesh and bloud ouercome me, O Lord, Let not the world, and the short glory therof deceaue me. Let not the Diuell and his subtile fraud, supplant me. Giue me force to resist, patience to suffer, and constancy to perseuere. Giue me insteed of all comforts of the world, the most sweet vnion of thy spirit, and in lieu of carnal loue, the loue of thy name.

4. Behold, meate, drinke, cloathes, and other necessaires for the maintenance of the body, are burdensome to a feruent spirit. Graunt me to affect such nourishments in due measure, & not to be intangled with an ouer great desire of them. It is not lawfull to re-

nounce them wholy, for that nature is to be maintained: but to desire superfluityes, and those thinges that do rather delight, then sustayne, the law of God forbides, for otherwise the flesh would rebell against the spirit. Herein I beseech thee, let thy hand gouerne me, and teach me, that I may not exceed.

CHAPT. XXVII.

That priuate loue most hindres from the chiefest good.

SOnne, thou oughtest to giue all for all, and to retaine nothing of thy selfe. Know that the loue of thy selfe, doth hurt thee more, then any thinge in the world. Euery thinge cleaue to the loue, & affection thou beareſt them. If thy loue be

pure, ſimple, and well ordered, thou ſhalt be free from bondage. Couet not that which thou maieſt not haue. Be not willinge to haue that, which may hinder thee of inward liberty. It is a wonderfull thinge that thou committeſt not thy ſelfe wholy vnto me from the bottome of thy hart, with all things, that thou canſt deſire, or haue.

2. Why doſt thou conſume thy ſelf with a vaine grief? Why tyreſt thou thy mind with needleſſe cares? Reſigne thy ſelfe to me, and thou ſhalt feele no loſſe at all. If thou ſeekeſt this or that, and wouldſt be here or there, to enioy thine owne commoditie and pleaſure, thou ſhalt neuer be in quiet, nor free from trouble of minde: for in euerie thing, ſomwhat wil be wanting, and in

euery place there will be ſome that will croſſe thee.

3. Not euery externall thing therfore attained, and heaped together, helpes thee, but it rather auailes, if thou doſt deſpiſe it, and roote it out of thy hart, which thou muſt not vnderſtād only of thy reuenues & wealth, but of the deſire of honour alſo, and vaine praiſe; all which doe paſſe away with this fadinge world. The place auailes little, if the ſpirit of feruour be wantinge: nether shall that peace which is ſought abroad long continue, if the ſtate of thy hart be deſtitute of a true foundation; that is, vnleſſe thou perſiſt in me, thou maiſt change, but not better thy ſelfe. For when occaſion doth happen, thou shalt finde that which thou ſoughteſt to fly, and perhaps more.

A prayer for cleanſing the hart, and obtaining of heauenlie wiſedome.

4. Confirme me O Lord with the grace of thy holy ſpirit. Giue me force to ſtrengthen my inward man, and to purge my hart from all vnprofitable care, and griefe; and not to be drawne away with ſundry deſires of any thing, either little or great; but to conſider how all thinges are tranſitory, and do quicklie fade, and that I my ſelfe doe alſo paſſe away together with them. For no thinge is permanent vnder the ſunne, where all thinges are vanity, and affliction of minde. O how wiſe is he that ſo conſideres them!

5. Graunt me O Lord heauenly wiſedome, that I may

learne aboue al thinges to ſeeke and finde thee, aboue all things to delight in thee, & to loue thee, and to thinke of all created thinges as they are, according to the diſpoſition of thy wiſedome. Graunt me prudently to auoyde him that flatters me, and to ſuffer patiently him that contradicts me. It is great wiſedome not to be moued with euery blaſt of wordes: nor to giue eare to dangerous flattery; for ſo we ſhall go on ſecurely in the way which we haue begun.

CHAPT. XXVIII.

Againſt the tongue of Slanderers.

SOnne, be not grieued if ſome thinke euill of thee,

and ſpeak that which thou doſt not willingly heare. Thou oughteſt to iudge the worſt of thy ſelfe, and to thinke no man weaker then thy ſelfe. If thou walk according to the ſpirit, thou wilt not much eſteeme of flying wordes. It is noe ſmall wiſdome, to be ſilent in time of euill, and inwardly to turne to me, and not to be troubled with the iudgement of men.

2. Let not thy peace be in the tongues of men. For whether they iudge well or euill, thou art neuertheleſſe alwaies the ſame. Where is true peace, and true glory? Is it not in me? And he that coueres not to pleaſe men; nor feares to diſpleaſe them, shall enioy much peace. From inordinate loue and vaine feare, ariſes all diſquiet of hart, and diſtraction of the ſenſes.

CHAPT. XXIX.

How we ought to call vpon God, and bleſſe him when tribulation drawes neere.

BLeſſed (O Lord) be thy name for euer, ſince it pleaſeth thee, that this temptation and tribulation ſhould fall vpon me I cānot fly it, but haue need to fly to thee, that thou maiſt helpe me, and turne it to my good. Lord I am now afflicted. and it is not well with me, I am much troubled with this preſēt griefe. And now, beloued Father, what ſhall I ſay ? I am taken in narrow ſtraites, ſaue me in this houre. Yea therfore I am fallen in this houre, that thou maiſt be glorified, when I ſhall be greatly humbled, and

by thee deliuered. Let it pleaſe thee, Lord, to deliuer me: for poore wretch that I am, what can I do, and whither shall I go without thee? Graunt patience Lord, euen this tyme too. Helpe me my God, and then I wil not feare how much ſoeuer I be oppreſſed.

2. And now in this, what shal I ſay; Lord, thy will be done, I haue well deſerued to be afflicted and grieued. Surely I ought to beare it: and I would to God I might beare it with patience vntill the tempeſt be paſſed ouer, and it become calme. But thy omnipotent hand is able to take this temptation from me, and to aſſwage the violence therof, that I vtterly ſinke not vnder it, as oftentimes heretofore thou haſt done vnto me (my God my Mercy!) And how much the more hard it is

to me, ſo much the more eaſie is this change of thy mighty hand to thee.

CHAPT. XXX.

Of crauinge the diuine aide, and confidence of recouering grace.

SOnne, I am thy Lord, who doe vſe to giue comfort in the day of tribulation. Come vnto me when it is not well with thee. This is that which moſt of all hindres heauenly conſolation, that thou art ſlow in turning thy ſelf vnto prayer. For before thou doſt earneſtly commend thy ſelfe to me, thou ſeekeſt many comforts, and delightſt thy ſelfe in outward things. And hence it proceedes that all doth little profit thee, vntill thou conſider that I am

he, that deliuers those that trust in me: & that out of me there is nether powerfull helpe, nor profitable counsell, nor remedy that can continue. But now thou hauing recouered breath after the tẽpest, gather strength againe in the light of my mercies: for I am at hand saith our Lord, to repare all, not only entirely, but also aboundantly.

2. Is there any thinge hard to me? or am I like to him that promises and performes not, Where is thy faith? Be firme ād perseuerant. Take courage & be patient, comfort will be giuen thee in due time. Attend me, expect, I will come and cure thee. It is a temptation that vexes thee, & a vaine feare that affrightes thee. What els doth the care for future incertainties bring thee, but sorrow vpon sorrow? Sufficient for the day

is the euill therof. It is a vaine & vnprofitable thing to be grieued, or to reioyce for future things, that perhaps will neuer happen.

3. But it is incident to man to be deluded with ſuch imaginations: and it is a ſigne of litle courage to be ſo eaſily drawn away by the ſuggeſtion of the enemy. For he cares not ſo he delude and deceaue thee whether it be true or falſe which he propoſeth: whether he ouerthrow thee with the loue of preſent, or the feare of future thinges. Let not therfore thy hart be troubled, nether doe thou feare. Beleeue in me, and put thy truſte in my mercy. When thou thinkeſt thy ſelfe furdeſt off from me, oftentimes I am neereſt to thee. When thou iudgeſt that almoſt all is loſt, then oftentimes greateſt

gaine of merit is at hand. All is not loſt, when any thing falles out contrary to thee. Thou muſt not iudge according to that which thou feeleſt for the preſent: nor giue thy ſelfe ouer to any griefe, from whence ſoeuer it commes, as though all hope of deliuery were quite gone.

4, Thinke not thy ſelfe wholy left, although for a time I haue ſent thee ſome tribulatiõ, or withdrawn thy deſired comfort: for this is the way to the Kingedome of heauen. And without doubt it is more expedient for thee, and the reſt of my ſeruants, that yee be exerciſed with many aduerſities, then that yee should haue all thinges accordinge to your deſires. I know the ſecret thoughts of thy hart, and that it is very expedient for thy ſoules health,

that thou be left ſometimes without taſt and feeling of ſpirituall ſweetnes, leaſt perhaps thou shouldeſt be puffed vp with good ſucceſſe, & shouldeſt pleaſe thy ſelfe in that, which thou art not. That which I haue giuen, I can take away, and reſtore it againe when I pleaſe.

5. When I giue it, it is mine: when I withdraw it, I take not any thing that is thine: for mine is euery good, and euery perfect gift. If I ſend thee affliction, or any croſſe whatſoeuer, repine not nor be not diſmayed, I can quickly lift thee vp againe, and turne all thy ſorrow into ioye. Neuertheleſſe I am iuſt, & greatlie to be praiſed, when I doe all in all in this ſort.

6. If thou be wiſe, and cõſider well thy caſe, thou wilt neuer yielde ſo cowardly to griefe

for any aduerſity that befalles thee, but rather reioyce and giue thanks: yea to accompt this thy only ioy, that afflicting thee with ſorrowes, I doe not ſpare thee. As my Father hath loued me, I alſo loue you, ſaid I vnto my beloued Diſciples, whom certainlie I ſent not to temporall ioyes, but to great conflicts: not to honours, but contempts: not to idlenes, but to labours: not to reſt, but to bringe much fruit in patience. My Sonne remember theſe words.

Of the contempt of all creatures to find out the Creatour.

CHAPT. XXXI.

LOrd, I ſtand yet in neede of great grace, if I muſt

goe ſo far as that no man or creature can hinder me. For as longe as any thing holdes me, I cannot fly freely to thee. He deſired to fly with great liberty that ſaid, Who will giue me winges like a doue, and I will fly and reſt? What thinge more quiet then a ſimple ey? And what more free, then he that deſires nothing vpon earth? Man ought therfore to aſcend aboue al creatures, and perfectly forſake himſelfe, and remaine in exceſſe of mind: & conſider that thou, who art the maker of all things, haſt nothing amongſt creaturs like to thy ſelfe. And vnleſſe a man be free from the affection of all creatures he cannot with freedome of minde attend vnto diuine thinges. And for this cauſe there are ſo fewe contemplatiue men to be found,

for that few can wholy ſequeſter themſelues from fadinge creatures.

2. Much grace is neceſſary to lift vp a ſoule, and to carry it aboue it ſelfe. And vnleſſe a man be lifted vp in ſpirit, and deliuered from al creatures, and wholy vnited vnto God, whatſoeuer he knowes, and whatſoeuer he hath, is of little accompt. Long shall he be little, and lie in earthlie baſenes, that eſteemes any thinge great, but the one only vnmeaſurable and eternall good. And whatſoeuer is not God is nothing, & ought to be accounted as nothing. There is great difference betweene the wiſdome of a ſpirituall and deuout perſon, and the knowledge of a learned and ſtudious Clarke. Far more noble is that learning, which flowes from aboue, from the

diuine influence, then that which is painfully gotten by the wit of man.

3. There are many that desire contemplation, but they endeauour not to exercise those things that are required thereunto. It is a great hinderance, that we rest in signes and sensible things, and haue little true mortificatiō. I know not what it is, nor by what spirit we are lead, nor what we pretend, we that seeme to be called spirituall, that we take so much paines, and so great care for trāsitory & base things, and scarce or seldome thinke of our owne inward profit, with ful recollection of our senses.

4. Alas, presently after a sleight recollection we break forth, and weigh not our wordes with diligent examination. We minde not where

our affections ly, nor bewaile the impurity and many faults that are in all our actions. For all flesh had corrupted her way, & therfore did that generall floud ensue. Sith our inward affection then is much corrupted, it must needes be that our action proceeding therof, be corrupted as a signe of the want of inward vigour. From à pure hart proceedes the fruit of good life.

5. We aske how much one hath done: but how vertuous his actions are, is not so diligently considered. We inquire whether he be stronge, rich, beautifull, hansome, à good writer, a good singer, or a good labourer: but how poore he is in spirit, how patient, and meeke, how deuout and spirituall, is seldome spoken of. Nature respectes outward things,

grace turnes herſelfe to the inward vertues. That is often deceaued: this hath her truſt in God, to the ende she be not deceaued.

CHAPT. XXXII.

Of deniall of our ſelues, and forſaking all our affections.

SOnne, thou canſt not poſſeſſe perfect liberty, vnleſſe thou wholy deny thy ſelfe. All ſuch as be louers of themſelues are bound in fetters, they are couetous, curious, wanderes, ſeekers of eaſe, and not of thoſe thinges that appertaine to Ieſus-Chriſt; but oftentimes deuiſinge, and framing that which wil not continue. For all shall perish, that proceedes not from God. Keep

this short and compleate word. Forſake all,& thou shalt find all. Leaue thy inordinate deſires , and thou shalt finde reſt. Conſider this well, and when thou haſt fulfilled it; thou shalt vnderſtand all.

2. Lord,this is not one daies worke, nor childrens ſport: yea in this short ſentence, al the perfection of Religious perſons is included. Sonne, thou muſt not goe back,nor ſtraight waies be deiected, when thou heareſt the way of the perfect, but rather be ſtirred vp to more worthy and noble attempts, or at leaſt to conceaue an earneſt deſire therof. I would it were ſo wel with thee, and thou wert come ſo far, that thou wert no longer a louer of thy ſelfe, but didſt ſtand meerly at my beck, and at his whom I haue appointed a Father ouer

thee, then thou shouldeſt exceedingly pleaſe me, and all thy life would paſſe away in ioy and peace. Thou haſt yet many thinges to forſake, which vnleſſe thou wholy reſigne ouer vnto me, thou shalt not attaine to that which thou deſireſt. I counſell thee to buy of me purified gold, that thou mayeſt become rich, that is, heauenly wiſdome, which treadeth vnder foot all baſe and earthly things Set little by the wiſdome of this world, & eſteeme not of the contentement of men, nor thine owne fancyes

3. I ſaid that thou shouldeſt buy the meane and baſe things, with the precious, & thoſe that were of great eſteeme amõgſt men. For true heauenly wiſdome ſeemes very baſe, and of

ſmall accompt, and is ſcarce thought of by men: for that eſteemes not highly of it ſelfe, nor ſeekes to be magnified vpõ earth: many indeed praiſe it from the teeth outward, but in their life they are far from it: yet is it the precious pearle which is hidden from many.

Of inconſtancy of hart, and of directing our ſmall intentions vnto God.

CHAPT. XXXIII.

SOnne, truſt not to affectiõ: that which now is, wil quickly be changed into another. As long as thou liueſt, thou art ſubiect to mutability, euen againſt thy will: ſo that now thou art merry, now ſad, now quiet, now troubled, now

deuout, now indeuout, now diligēt, now idle, no vheauy, now light. But he that is wiſe, and well inſtructed in ſpirit, remaines alwaies one in the middeſt of theſe changes, not heeding what he feeles in himſelfe, or which way the wind of mutability blow: but that thewhole intentiō of his mind, may tend as it ought, to the moſt perfect and beſt end. For ſo he may continue one, and the ſelfe ſame, without any change in the middſt of ſo many ſundry chaunces, directing alwaies the ſincere eie of his intention to me.

2. And how much purer the eye of the intention is, ſo much the more conſtantly doth he paſſe through the variety of many contrary waues. But in many things the eye of a ſin-

cere intention waxes blind; for it quickly lookes vpon ſome delight, ſome obiect that occures. And it is rare to find one that is wholy free from all blemish of ſeeking himſelfe. So the Iewes in times paſt came into Bethania to Martha and Mary, not for Ieſus alone, but to ſee Lazarus alſo. The eye of the intention therfore, is to be purged, that it may be ſincere and pure, & to be directed vnto me, neglecting the multitude & variety of earthly obiects.

CHAPT. XXXIV.

That God is ſweete aboue all thinges, and in all thinges to him that loues.

BEhold my God, and all things! What would I haue

more, & what can I desire more happy? O sweet and comfortable worde! but to him that loues the word, not the world, nor those things that are in the world. My God, and all things! Inough is said to him that vnderstandes: and it is pleasant to him that loues, to repeat often. For when thou art present, all things do yield delight, but when thou art absent, all becomes irksome, Thou giuest quiet of hart and much peace, and pleasant ioy. Thou makest men thinke well of all, and praise thee in all things, nether can any thing please vs long without thee: but if it be pleasant and delightsome, thy grace must be present, and it must be seasoned with the sweetnes of thy wisdome.

2. What can be distastfull to him, to whom thou art plea-

ſing? And whom thou deligh-reſt not, what can be pleaſant to him? But the wiſe of this world, and that haue their contentment in ſenſuall things, cá-not attaine to thy wiſdome, for in the world is much vanity, and in the flesh is death. But they that follow thee by the cõtempt of wordly things, and mortification of the flesh, are proued to be truely wiſe: for they are changed from vanity to truth, from flesh to ſpirit. To theſe God is ſweet & what good ſoeuer is found in creatures, they wholy referre vnto the praiſe of their Maker. great Notwithſtanding, yea very great is the difference, between the ſweetnes of the Creatour, & of the creature, of eternity & of time, of vncreated and created light.

3. O euerlaſting light, ſurpaſ-

ſing all created lights, caſt forth the beames of thy brightneſſe from aboue, and pierce the moſt inward corner of my hart: purify, reioyce, clarify and quicken my ſpirit with all the powers thereof, that I may cleaue vnto thee with exceſſe of vnſpeakable ioy. O when wil that bleſſed and deſired houre come, that I may be filled with thy preſence, and thou maiſt be vnto me all in all things? as long as this is not graunted me, I shall not haue ful nor perfect ioy. Alas! my old man yet liueth in me, he is not wholy crucified, he is not perfectly dead, he doth yet couet ſtrongly againſt the ſpirit, & moueth ciuile warrs, & ſuffereth not the Kingdom of my ſoule to be in peace.

4 But thou that rulest the powers of the ſea, and aſſwa-

geſt the motion, of the waues, riſe and help me: diſſipate the people that deſire war, and deſtroy them in thy might, and let thy hand be glorified: for there is no hope nor refuge for me, but in thee, my Lord God.

CHAPT. XXXV.

That there is no ſecurity from temptation in this life.

SOnne, there is no ſecurity in this life: as long as thou liueſt thou shalt alwaies haue need of ſpirituall armour. Thou liueſt among enemies, and art aſſaulted on al ſides: if therfore thou defendeſt not thy ſelfe on euery ſide with the shield of patience, thou canſt not be long vnwounded. Mo-

reouer if thou fixe not thy hart on me, with a ſincere will to ſuffer all things for me, thou canſt not ſuſtaine the heat of this battaille, nor get that victorious crowne, which they haue that are in glory. Thou oughteſt therfore manfully to goe through all, and to vſe a ſtrong hād againſt whatſoeuer withſtandeth thee. For to him that ouercommeth is giuen Manna; and to the negligent is left much woe.

2. If thou ſeekeſt reſt in this world, how wilt thou then attaine to euerlaſting reſt? Giue not thy ſelfe to much eaſe, but to much patience. Seeke true peace, not in earth, but in heauen; not in men, nor in any creature, but in God alone. Thou oughteſt for the loue of God, willingly to vndergoe what ſoeuer griefes, temptations,

tations, vexations, anxieties, neceſſities, infirmities, iniuries, detractions, reprehenſions, humiliations, confuſions, corrections, and contempts: theſe helpe to the attaining of vertue: theſe try a Nouice of Chriſt, theſe make a heauenly crowne. I will giue an euerlaſting reward for a short labour, and infinite glory for tranſitory confuſion.

3. Thinkeſt thou, that thou shalt alwaies haue ſpiritual cõſolations at will? My Saints had not ſo, but many afflictions, and ſundry temptations, and many diſcomforts: all which they endured patiently, and truſted rather in God, then in themſelues. knowinge that the ſufferings of this time, are not condigne to the deſeruing of future glory. Wilt thou haue that ſtraight wayes, which

many after teares, and great labours haue hardly obteyned' Expect the comming of thy Lord, do manfully, be of good courage: feare not, do not flye, but offer both body & ſoule for the glory of God. I will reward thee in moſt plentifull manner, and I will be with thee in al thy tribulations.

CHAPT. XXXVI.

Againſt the vaine Iudgement of men.

SOnne, fixe thy hart ſtedfaſtly on God, feare not the iudgements of men, when thy conſcience giueth teſtimony of thy iuſtice & innocency. It is a good and a happy thing to ſuffer in that ſort: neither will it be burdenſome to an humble

minde, nor to him that truſteth rather in God, then in himſelfe. The moſt part of men are giuen to talke much, & therfor little care is to be had of their words: neither is it poſſible to ſatisfy all. Though the Apoſtle endeauoured to pleaſe all in our Lord, and made himſelfe all vnto al, yet he little regarded that he was iudged by men.

2. He did for the edification and health of others as much as he could, & lay in him: yet could he not hinder, but that he was ſomtimes iudged, and deſpiſed by others. Therfore he committed all to God, who knew all, & defended himſelfe with parience, & humility againſt euil tongues, & ſuch as thought vanities and lyes, and ſpeake what they liſted: Yet ſomtimes notwithſtanding he anſwered, leaſt the weake

might haue receaued ſcandall by his ſilence.

3. Who art thou, that feareſt a mortall man? to day he is, and to morrow he is not ſeene, Feare God and the terror of men ſhall not trouble thee. What harme can the wordes or iniuries of any do thee? he rather hurteth himſelfe thē thee: neyther can he auoyd the iudgments of God, be what he will. Haue thou God before thine eies, & contend not with complaining wordes. And if for the preſent thou ſeemeſt to be troaden dowue, and to ſuffer ſhame and confuſion without deſert, doe not repine, neither doe thou leſſen thy crowne by thy impatience, but rather lift vp thine eyes to me in heauen. I am able to deliuer thee from ſhame and wrong, and to re-

pay euery one according to their works.

CHAPT. XXXVII.

Of a full and pure resignation of our selues for the obtaining freedome of hart.

SOnne, leaue thy selfe, and thou shalt finde me. Make choice of nothing, appropriate nothing to thy selfe, and thou shal euer gaine. For greater grace shall alwaies be giuen thee When thou dost perfectly resigne thy selfe, and not turne back to take thy selfe againe. Lord, how often shall I resigne my selfe? and wherin shall I forsake my selfe? Alwaies, and in euery thing, as wel in little as in great. I do except nothing, but doe re-

quire that thou be as it were naked and void of all things. Otherwiſe how canſt thou be perfectly mine, and I thine, vnleſſe both within and without, thou be free from all ſelfe will? And how much the ſooner thou doſt this, ſo much the better ſhalt thou finde thy ſelfe: and how much the more fully and ſincerly thou doſt it, ſo much the more ſhalt thou pleaſe me, and ſo much the more ſhalt thou gaine:

2. Some there are that reſigne themſelues, but with ſome exception; For they put not their whole truſt in God, and therfore doe labour to prouide for themſelues. Some alſo at the firſt do offer all, but afterwards being aſſailed with temptatiõs, doe returne againe to that which they had left, and therfore they go not for-

wards in the way of vertue. Theſe shal not attaine to the true liberty of a pure hart, nor to the grace of my diuine familiarity, vnleſſe they firſt make an entire reſignation, and offer themſelues a daily ſacrifice vnto me. For without this can neuer be obtained the vnion with me, wherwith my Saints enioy me.

3. I haue often ſaid vnto thee, and now againe I ſay the ſame: Forſake thy ſelfe, reſigne thy ſelfe, and thou shalt enioy internall peace. Giue all for all, ſeeke nothing, require nothing, repoſe thy ſelfe purely and with a ful confidence in me, and I wil giue my ſelfe vnto thee, & darknes shall not couer thee. Let this be thy whole endeauour, lett this be thy praiſe, let this be thy deſire, that caſting of al propriety, thou maiſt all

naked follow thy naked Sauiour Ieſus, and dying to thy ſelfe, maiſt liue eternally to me. Then shal vaine fantaſies, euil perturbations, and all ſuperfluous cares fly away: then shall immoderate feare leaue thee, & inordinate loue shall dye.

CHAP. XXXVIII.

Of good gouuerment in outward things: and of recourſe to God in dangers.

SOnne, thou oughteſt with al diligence to procure, that in euery place, action, and externall buſineſſe, thou be inwardly free, and maiſter of thy ſelfe, & that all thinges be vnder thy diſpoſition, and thou not ſubiect to them; that thou

maist be Lord and Maister of thy actions, not a seruant or a hireling, but rather a free man, & a true Hebrew, belonging to the lot & freedome of the sonnes of God, who put the things that are present vnder their feet, and place their thoughts on that which is eternall: who looke on transitory things with the left eye, & with the right, doe behold heauenly things, who suffer not themselues to be drawne to cleaue to temporalities, but rather dispose and vse them, as they are ordained by God, and appointed by the Creatour of all, who hath left nothing in his creatures without due order.

2. If thou remaine firme and stedfast in all euents, and doest not weigh by the outward apparēce, nor with a carnall eye, the thinges which thou seest

& heareſt, but preſently in eue-
ry occaſion doſt enter with
Moyſes into the Tabernacle to
aske conunſell of our Lord,
thou shalt ſomtime heare the
diuine oracle, and shalt returne
inſtructed of many thinges both
preſent and to come. Moyſes
had alwaies recourſe to the Ta-
bernacle for the deciding of al
doubts & obſcure queſtions, &
fled to the help of prayer, for
the remedy of the iniquity
and dangers of men. So ough-
teſt thou in like manner to fly
to the cloſet of thy hart, ear-
neſtly crauing the diuine fa-
uour. For the Scripture teſtifies,
that therfore was Ioſue and
the children of Iſrael deceaued
by the Gabaonites, becauſe
they conſulted not firſt with
God, but were deluded with
counterfaite piety, giuing too
lightly credit to faire words.

CHAPT. XXXIX.

That a man be not ouer-earnest in his affaires.

SOnne, alwaies commit thy cause to me, I will dispose well of it in due time: expect my ordination, and thou shalt find it wil be for thy good. Lord, I doe most willingly commit all vnto thee, for my care can profit little. O that I did not too much adheare to future euents, but offere my selfe with all readinesse of minde to thy diuine pleasure!

2. Sonne, oftentimes a man doth earnestly labour for that which he desires, and when he hath gotten it, he beginnes to be of another minde, and not to esteeme so much of it as be-

fore he did: for mans affections doe not long continue fixed on one thing, but doe paſſe from one to another. It is therfor a matter, nor of leaſt moment, to forſake our ſelues euen in the leaſt things.

3. The true ſpirituall profit of man, conſiſtes in forſaking of himſelfe: & he that is reſigned, liues in great freedome and ſecurity. But the ancient enemy, who alwaies laboures to withſtand the ſeruants of God, omittes at noe times his wonted temptations, but day and night lies ſtill in waite, to caſt the vnwary, if he can, into the ſnare of deceipt. Watch therfore & pray, ſaith our Lord, that you enter not into temptation.

CHAPT. XL.

That man hath no good of himselfe, nor any thinge wherof he can glory.

LOrd, what is man, that thou art mindfull of him, or the sonne of man, that thou vouchsafest to visit him? What hath man deserued that thou shouldest giue him thy grace? Lord, what cause haue I to complaine, if thou forsake me? Or if thou dost not that which I desire, what can I iustly say against it? Surely, this I may truly thinke and say: Lord I am nothing, I can do nothing, I haue nothing that is good of my selfe: but in all thinges I am defectiue, and doe euer tend to nothing: vnlesse thou

doſt helpe, and interiouſly inſtruct me, I become cold, and am diſſolued.

2. But thou, O Lord, art alwaies the ſame, and durest for euer, alwaies good, iuſt, & holy, doing all things well, iuſtly, and holily, and diſpoſing al things with wiſdome. But I that am more inclined to fall, then to goe forwardes, doe neuer continue in one eſtate: for I am ſeauen tymes a day changed: yet doth it ſoone turne to the better, when it ſo pleaſes thee, and when thou vouchſafeſt to ſtretch forth thy helping hand. For thou alone canſt help me without the fauour of many: and ſo ſtrengthen me, that thy countenance ſhall be no more changed, but my hart ſhalbe conuerted and reſt in thee alone.

3. Wherfore if I could once

perfectly forsake all humane comfort, ether for the loue of deuotion, or for mine owne necessity, which inforces me to seek after thee (for none els can comfort me) then might I wel hope in thy grace, and reioyce in the gift of new consolation.

4. Thankes be to thee, from whence al proceedes, as often as it goes well with me: but I an vnconstant and weake man am meere vanities and nothing before thee. Wherof then can I glory? Is it not of nothing? And this is most vayne. Truly vaine glory is an euil plague, a very greate vanity; because it drawes from true glory, & robbes the soule of heauenly grace. For whilst a man pleases himselfe, he displeases thee: whilst he gapes after the praise of men, he is depri-

ued of true vertue.

5. But it is true glory & holy exultation, and ioy, for a man to glory in thee, and not in himselfe; to reioyce in thy name, & not in his owne vertue, nor to delight in any creature, but for thee Praised be thy name, not mine: magnified be thy worke, not mine: let thy holy name be for euer blessed, but to me lett noe part of mens praises be giuen Thou art my glory, thou art the ioy of my hart In thee wil I glory & reioyce all the day; but for my selfe I wil not ioy, but in my infirmityes.

6. Let the Iewes seeke the glory which one man giues to another; I will desire this, which is from God alone. For all humane glory, all temporall honour, all wordly highnesse, compared to thy eternall

glory

glory, is vanity and folly. O my truth, my mercy, my God, moſt Bleſſed Trinity, to thee alone be all praiſe, honour, vertue, & glory for all eternity.

CHAPT. XLI.

Of the contempt of all temporall Honours.

SOnn, trouble not thy ſelfe, if thou ſeeſt others honored and aduanced, and thy ſelfe contemned & debaſed. Lift vp thy hart to me (in heauen, & the contempt of men in earth wil not greeue thee. Lord, we are blind, & quickly ſeduced with vanity. If I looke well into my ſelfe, I cannnot ſay that any creature hath done me wrong, & therfore I cannot iuſtly complaine of thee.

Ce. But because I haue often & greeuously sinned against thee, all creatures doe iustly take armes against me: for shame and contempt is due to me, but to thee praise, honour, and glorie. And vnlesse I do so prepare my selfe, that I be willing, and doe reioyce to be despised and forsaken of all creatures, and to be esteemed nothing at all, I cannot obtaine internall strength and peace, nor be spiritually enlightned, nor wholy vnited to thee.

CHAPT. XLII.

That our peace is not to be placed in men.

SOnne, if the peace thou hast with any, be grounded on the opinion which

thou haſt of him, or on the contentment thou receaueſt in his company, thou ſhalt euer be vnconſtant & ſubiect to diſquiet: but if thou haue recourſe to the euer-liuing & eternall Truth, a friend going from thee or dying ſhal not greeue thee. The loue of thy friend ought to reſt in me, and for me is he to be beloued whoſoeuer he be whom thou thinkeſt well of, and is verily deare to thee in this life. No friendship can anaile, or continue without me; neither is the loue true and pure, which they haue, whoſe hartes are not ioyned together by me. Thou oughteſt to be ſo dead to ſuch affections of beloued friends, that (foraſmuch as appertaines to thee), thou ſhouldeſt wish to be without all company of men. Man approacheth ſo much the neerer

to God, by how much the further off he departes from all earthlie comfort: so much the higher also he ascendes vnto God, by how much lower he descendes into himselfe, and how much the baser he is in his owne conceipt.

2. But he that attributes any good to himself, hindres the comming of Gods grace into him For the grace of the holy Ghost, euer seekes an humble hart. If thou couldest perfectly anihilate thy selfe, & purge thy selfe of all created loue, then should ther flow into thee great aboundance of my grace. When thou casteſt thyne eyes on creatures, the sight of thy Creatour is taken from thee. Learne to ouercome thy selfe in all things, for the loue of thy Creatour: & then shalt thou be able to attaine to hea-

uenly knowledge. How little ſoeuerit be, if it be inordinatly loued and regarded, it defiles the enioying of the chiefeſt good.

CHAPT. XLIII.

Againſt vaine and ſecular Knowledge.

SOnne, let not the faire ſpeeches and ſubtile ſayinges of men moue thee, for the Kingedome of God conſiſtes not in wordes, but in vertue. Obſerue well the words which I ſpeake; for they inflame the hart, & enlighten the minde, induce compunction, and bring ſundry comforts Doe thou neuer reade to shew thy ſelfe learned or wiſe: but labour to mortify thy vices, for that wil

profit thee more, then the knowledge of many hard and difficult queſtions.

2. When thou shalt haue read and knowne many thinges, thou oughteſt euer to returne to one beginning I am he that teaches man all knowledge: and doe giue to little ones a more cleare vnderſtanding, thē can be taught by man. He therfore, to whom I ſpeake, shall quickly be wiſe, and shall profit much in ſpirit. Woe be to them that inquire many curious thinges of men, and doe little deſire to knowe the way how to ſerue me. The time will come, when the Maſter of Maſters, Chriſt the Lord of Angells shall appeare, to heare the leſſons of all, that is, to examine the conſciences of euery one: and then he will ſearch Hieruſalem with a

candle, and the hidden things of darkenesse shall be laid opē, & the inuentions of tongues shall be silent.

3. I am he that in an instant doe raise vp the humble minde to vnderstand more reasons of the euerlasting truth, then can be gotten by ten yeares study in schooles. I teach without noise of words, without confusion of opinions, without ambition of honour, without contention of arguments. I am he that teacheth to despise earthly thinges, to loath things present, to seeke the euerlasting, to delight in the thinges that are eternall, to fly honours, to suffer scandall, to place al hope in me, to desire nothinge out of me, and aboue all things feruently to loue me.

4. For a certaine person by

louing me entirely, learned diuine things, & ſpake wonders: he profited more in forſaking all thinges, then in ſtudying ſubtilities. To ſome I ſpeak ordinary things. to others, things more eſpeciall, to ſome I appeare ſweetly by ſignes and figures, but to ſome I reueale miſteries with much light. The voice of bookes is one and the ſame, but it teaches not all mē a like. For I am the internall teacher, I am the Truth, the ſearcher of the harte, the vnderſtander of thoughtes, the ſetter forwardes of good works, diſtributing to euery one according to my will.

CHAPT. XLIV.

Of not drawing outwarde things to our ſelues.

SOnne, in many things thou oughteſt to be ignorant, and eſteeme thy ſelfe as dead vpon earth; ad as one to whom the whole world is crucified. Thou muſt alſo paſſe ouer many thinges with a deafe eare, and rather thinke of that which appertaines to thy peace. It is more profitable to turne thine eye from the ſight of vnpleaſing thinges, and to leaue vnto euery one his owne opinion, then to ſtriue with contentious words. If thou ſtandeſt well with God, and conſidereſt his iudgements, thou ſhal the

more easily yeild to the will of others.

2. O Lord, to what an estate are we come! Beholde, we bewaile a temporall losse, and for a little gaine we toile and spare no labour, and the spirituall domage of our soule is forgotten, and hardly at length called to mind! That which little or nothing profites, is alwaies remembred, & that which is chiefly necessary, is negligently passed ouer, because mans nature carries him to externall thinges, and vnlesse he quickly returne to himselfe, he lyes drowned in them with delight.

CHAPT. XLV.

That credit is not to be giuen to all men: and how prone man is to offend in wordes.

HElpe me Lord, in my tribulation, for vaine is the defence of man. How often haue I bene deceaued, finding want of faith, where I thought it ſure: And how often haue I founde faith, where I leaſt expected it? It is vaine therfore to truſt in men, but the ſafety of the iuſt, O Lord, is in thee. Bleſſed be thou my God, in all thinges that befall vs. We are weake and inconſtant, quickly deceaued. and ſoone changed.

2. Who is he, that is able ſo warily to keepe himſelfe, that

he neuer fall into any deceipt or doubt ? But he that truſtes in thee O Lord, and ſeekes thee with a pure hart, doth not eaſily fall; and if he fal into any tribulation, be he neuer ſo much inthralled, yet he shall quickly be deliuered or comforted by thee, for thou wilt not forſake him for euer, that truſtes in thee. The friend is rare to be found, that continues faithfull in his friends diſtreſſe: but thou, O Lord, thou alone art faithful at all times, and there is none like to thee.

3. O how wiſe was that holy ſoule that ſaid: My minde is firmly ſetled, and grounded in Chriſt! If it were ſo with me, then would not humane feare ſo eaſily trouble me, nor wordes moue me. Who can forſee all things? Who is able

to beware before hand, of future euils? If things euen foreseene do oftentimes hurt vs, how can thinges vnlooked for, chooſe but wound vs grieuouſly? But why did I not prouid better for my ſelfe, miſerable wretch? Why alſo haue I ſo eaſily giuen credit to others? But alas we are men, and God knowes, weak and fraile men, although by many we are reputed and called Angels. To whom shal I giue credit Lord? to whom but to thee? Thou art the truth that nether doſt deceaue, nor eanſt be deceaued. And on the other ſide, euery man is a liar, weake, vnconſtant and ſubiect to fall, eſpecially in wordes: and therfore we muſt not eaſily giue credit euen to that, which in outward shew ſeemes at the firſt a certaine truth.

4. O with how great wiſedome haſt thou warned vs to take heed of men! And becauſe the enemies of man are his familiar and domeſticall acquaintance, not to truſt, if one ſhould ſay: Behold heere, or behold there. I am taught to my coſt, and I would to God I might thereby increaſe my care, and not my folly. Be wary, ſayth one, be wary, keepe vnto thy ſelf what I tell thee: and whilſt I hold my peace, and thinke it is ſecret, he cannot keepe that ſecret, which he deſired ſhould be ſecret, but preſently diſcloſes me and himſelfe, and goes his way. From ſuch tales, and ſuch improuident people, protect me Lord, that I fall not into their hãds, nor euer commit ſuch errours. Giue me grace my God to obſerue truth, and conſtancy in

my words, and remoue far frō me a deceiptfull tongue. What I am not willing to ſuffer, I ought by all meanes to auoid.

5. O how good and quiet a thing it is to be ſilent, and not to talke of others, nor to beleeue all that is ſaid, nor eaſily to report what we haue heard; to lay ones ſelfe open to fewe; alwaies to ſeeke after thee, the beholder of the harts; nor to be carried about with euery winde of Wordes, but to deſire that all thinges both within and without, be accomplished according to thy wil and pleaſure. How ſecure is it for the keeping of heauenly grace, to fly the ſight of men? And not to ſeeke thoſe thinges, that ſeeme to cauſe admiration abroad, but to follow that with all diligence, which bringes

amendment of life, and increaſe of feruour.

6. To how many hath knowne and ouer haſtily commended vertue beene hurtfull? How profitable hath grace bene, kept with ſilence in this mortall life, which is nothing but a perpetuall temptation, and a warfare?

CHAPT. XLVI.

Of putting our truſt in God, when euill words ariſe.

SOnne, be conſtant, and put thy truſt in me. For what are wordes, but wordes? They paſſe through the ayre, but hurt not. If thou be guilty, determine willingly to amend thy ſelfe: if thou be innocent, reſolue to ſuffer this willingly,

at

least for God. It is a small matter to suffer sometimes a few words, if thou hast not yet the courage to endure stirpes. And why doe small matters goe to thy hart, but because thou art yet carnall, and regardest men more then thou oughtest? Because thou art afraid to be despised, therefore thou wilt not be reprehended for thy faults, and therfore seekest shaddowes of excuses.

2. But looke better into thy selfe and thou shalt see, that the world yet liues in thee, and a vaine desire to please men. For when thou refusest to be humbled, & reproued for thy faults, it is surely euident, that thou art neither truly humble, nor dead to the world, nor the world perfectly crucified to

to thee. But giue diligent eare to my wordes, and thou shalt little respect ten thousand words spoken by men. Behold, if all should be spoken against thee, that could be most maliciously inuented, what would it hurt thee, if thou didst suffere it to passe, and madest no reckoning at all of it? Could all those wordes plucke as much as one haire from thy head?

3. But he that enters not into his owne heart, nor hath God before his eyes, is easily moued with euery little dispraise; where as he that trustes in me, & confides not in his owne iudgment shall be free from humane feares For I am the Iudge and the discerner of all secrets. I know how the matter passed, I know him that offeres the iniury, and

him that suffries it. Frō me hath this word proceeded, this hath happened by my permission, that out of many harts, thoughts may be reuealed. I shal iudge the guiltie and the innocent, but by secret iudgment I would beforehand try them both.

4. The testimonye of men oftentimes deceaueth: my iudgement is alwaies true; it shal stand, and not be ouerthrowne. It is commonly hidden and throughly knowne to few: notwithstanding it neuer erres, neither can it erre, although to the eies of the foolish, it seemes not right. Men ought therefore to returne to me in euery iudgement, and not to stand in their owne opiniōs. For the iust man will not be troubled, whatsoeuer God shall send him: Yea if any thinge

be wrongfully brought forth againſt him, he will not much care, neither will he vainely be glad, if by others he be with reaſon excuſed. For he conſideres that I am he, that ſearches the hart & reines, & iudges not according to the outward face, nor Iumana apparence. For that is oftentimes found culpable in my ſight, that in the iudgement of men is commendable.

5. O Lord my God, the iuſt Iudge, ſtrong, and patient, thou knoweſt the frailty and peruerſity of man, be thou my ſtrength, and all my truſt, for mine owne conſcience ſuffices me not. Thou knoweſt that which I cannot reach vnto, and therefore in euery reprehenſion, I ought to haue ſubmitted my ſelfe, and to haue borne it patiently: vouch-

safe mercifully to pardon me, as often as I haue fayled herein, & giue me againe grace of greater sufferance: for thy bountifull mercy is more auaylable to me for the obtayning of pardon, then my cõceaued iustice, for the defence of my hidden conscience. Although my conscience accuse me not, yet I cannot hereby iustifie my selfe; for without thy mercy, no man liuinge shalbe iustified in thy sight.

CHAPT. XLVII.

That all grieuous thinges are to be endured for life euerlasting.

SOnne, let not the paines dismay thee, which thou hast vndertaken for me, nei-

ther be thou discomforted for the tribulations which doe befall thee; but let my promise strengthen and comfort thee in all euents. I am able to reward thee aboue al measure. Thou shalt not longe toile here, nor alwaies be oppressed with griefe. Attend a while, and thou shalt see a speedy end of thy euils. There will come an houre, when all labour and trouble shall cease. Little, and short, is all that passes away with time.

2. Doe what thou dost, labour faithfully in my vineyard, I will be thy reward. Write, reade, singe, mourne, obserue silence, pray, suffer crosses mānfully: life euerlasting is worth al these, and greater combats. Peace shall come in the day which is knowne to our Lord, nād there shall nether be day nor

night to witt of this tyme, but euerlasting light, infinite brightneſſe, ſtedfaſt peace, and ſecure reſt. Then thou shalt not ſay: who shall deliuer me frō the body of this death? Nor cry, woe be to me, for that my dwelling in a ſtrange countrey is prolonged! For death shal be throwne downe, and health shall be without decay: ther shall be no anxiety, but bleſſed ioy, ſweet and gracefull ſocietie.

3. O that thou hadſt ſeene the euerlasting crownes of the Saints in heauen, and with how great glory they now reioyce, who in times paſt were contemptible to this world, & eſteemed vnworthy of life it ſelfe? truly thou wouldeſt preſently humble thy ſelfe euen vnto the earth: and Wouldeſt rather ſeeke to be vnder the feete of all, then to haue com-

mand, ſo much as ouer one: ne-ther wouldſt thou deſire plea-ſant dayes of this life, but rather reioyce to be afflicted for God, & eſteeme it thy greateſt gaine to be reputed as nothing amongſt men.

4. If thou hadſt a feeling of theſe things, & didſt ſuffer them to enter into the depth of thy hart, how durſt thou ſo much as once complaine! Are not all painefull labours to be endured for euerlaſting life? Is it no ſmall matter to looſe or to gaine the Kingedome of heauen? Lift vp thine eyes therfore to heauen: behold, I and all my Saints with me, who in this world had great conflicts, do now reioyce, now are conforted, now are ſecure, now do reſt, & shal remaine with me euerlaſtingly in the Kingdome of my Father.

CHAPT. XLVIII.

Of the euerlastinge day, and shortnesse of this life.

O Most blessed mansion of the heauenly Citty! O most cleare day of Eternity, which night obscures not, but the soueraigne truth euer enlightnes: ô day euer pleasant, euer secure, and neuer changing into a contrarie state! O that, that day would once appeare, and all these temporall things were at an end! To the Saints it shines glistering with euerlasting brightnesse, but to those that are Pilgrimes vpon earth, it appeares only a far off, and as it were through a glasse.

2. The inhabitants of heauen,

doe know how ioyfull that day is: but the banished children of Eue bewaile the bitternes and tediouſnes of this. The dayes of this life are short and euill, full of ſorrow and anguish, where man is defiled with many ſinnes, incumbered with many paſſions, diſquiered with many feares, filled with many cares, diſtracted with many curioſities, intangled with many vanities, compaſſed about with many errours, worne away with many labours, vexed with temptations, weakned with delights, tormented with want.

3. O when shall theſe euils be at an end! When shall I be deliuered from the miſerable bõdage of ſin! When shal I thinke, O Lord, of thee alone! When shall I perfectly reioyce in thee, When shall I be free from al

impediments in true liberty, without all griefe of mind and body! when shall I haue firme peace, peace ſecure, and without trouble, peace within and without, peace euery way aſſured! O good Ieſu, when shall I ſtand to behold thee! When shall I contemplate the glory of thy Kingdome! When wilt thou be to me all in all thinges! O when shall I be with thee in thy Kingdome, which thou haſt prepared for thy beloued, from all eternitie! I am left a poore and banished man in the land of mine enemies, where there are daily warres, and great misfortunes.

4. Comfort my banishement, aſſwage my ſorrowe: for my whole deſire ſendes vpp ſighes to thee. For all is burdenſome to me, whatſoeuer this world offeres for my comfort. I deſire

familiarlie to enioy thee, but I attaine not to it. I would gladly fixe my harte on heauēly things, but temporal cares and vnmortified passiōs weigh me downe. In mind I would be aboue all things; but to my flesh I am inforced to be subiect against my will. Thus, vnhappy man that I am, I fight against my selfe, & am become grieuous to my selfe, whilst my spirit seekes after the thinges that are aboue, & my flesh that which is below.

5. O what doe I inwardly suffer, when in mind I consider heauenly things, & presently in my prayers a multitude of fleshly fantasies, present themselues before me! My God, be not farre from me, depart not in thy wrath from thy seruant. Cast forth thy lightning, and disperse them: send out thy

darts, and breake all the fantasies of my enemy. Gather my senses together vnto thee: make me forget the thinges of this world: grant me grace to cast away speedily, the fantasies of vices. Succour me, ô euerlasting truth, that no vanity may moue me. Come heauenly sweetnesse, and let all impurity fly from thy face Pardon me also, and mercifully forgiue me as often as in prayer I thinke vpon any thing els besides thee. I truly confesse, that I am wont to be subiect to many distractions: for oftentimes I am not there, where I doe corporally stand, or sit; but rather there, whiter my thoughts doe carry me. Where my thought is, there am I: there is oftentimes my thought, where my affections That quickly occures to me, which is

naturally delightſome or pleaſing by cuſtome.

6. And for this cauſe, thou that art truth it ſelfe, haſt plainely ſaid. Where thy treaſure is there is alſo thy hart If I loue heauen, I willingly thinke of heauenly things. If I loue the world, I reioyce at the felicity of the world, and greeue for the aduerſity therof. If I loue the flesh, I imagine oftentimes thoſe thinges that are pleaſing to the flesh. If I loue the ſpirit, I delight to thinke of ſpirituall things. For whatſoeuer I loue, thereof doe I willingly ſpeake, and heare, and carry home with me the formes & repreſentations therof. O bleſſed is that man, that for thee, ô Lord, forſakes all creatures; that violently reſiſtes nature, and out of the feruour of ſpirit, crucifies the concu-

piſcences of the flesh: that with a cleare conſcience, he may offer ſincere prayers to thee, and be worthy of the company of the angelicall quiers, all earthly things, outwardly and inwardly, being excluded.

CHAPT. XLIX.

Of the deſire of euerlaſting life, & how great rewards are promiſed to thoſe that fight valiantly.

SOnne, when thou perceaueſt the deſire of euerlaſting bliſſe to be giuen thee from aboue, thou deſireſt to depart out of the Tabernacle of this body, that thou maiſt without shaddow or any interchang behold my light; open thy hart, and receaue this holy inſpira-

tion with thy whole desire. Giue great thanks to the heauenly goodnesse, that deales with thee so fauourably, visites thee mercifully, stirres thee vp feruently, holdes thee vpp powerfully, least through thine owne weight, thou fall downe to the vanities of the earth. Nether dost thou obtaine this by thine owne thought or endeauour, but by the only fauour of heauenly grace & diuine bounty, that thou maist profit in vertue, and obtaine greater humility, and prepare thy selfe to future battailes, & endeauour to cleaue vnto me, with the whole affection of thy hart, & serue me with a feruent desire.

2. Sonne, fire often burnes, but the flame ascendes not vp without smoke: so likwise the desires of some men are easily carried

carried to heauenly things, yet they are not free from temptation of carnall affection: and therfore it is not altogether purely for the honour of God, that which they ſo earneſtly requeſt of him. Such is alſo oftentimes thy deſir, which with ſuch importuniry thou preſenteſt vnto me. For that is not pure & perfect, which is infected with the loue of thine owne intereſt.

3. Aske not that which is delightſome and profitable to thee, but that which is grateſull to me, and appertaines to my honour, for if thou iudgeſt aright, thou oughteſt to preferre and follow my appointment, rather then thine owne deſire, or any deſired thing. I know thy deſire, and haue heard thy frequēt grones. Now thou wouldeſt be in the free-

dome of the glory of the Sõnes of God: now doth the euerlasting habitation, and the heauenly Country full of ioy delight thee, but this houre is not yet come: there is yet another time, to witt, a time of warre of labour and triall. Thou desireſt to be filled with the chiefeſt good, but thou canſt not attaine it for the preſent. I am he, ſaith our Lord, expect vntil the kingdome of God doth come.

4. Thou art yet to be tryed vpon earth, and to be exerciſed in many thinges. Comfort shall be ſometimes giuen thee, but aboundant fulnes therof shall not be graunted. Take courage therfore, and be conſtant as wel in doing, as in ſuffering things contrary to nature. Thou oughteſt to put on a new mã, and to be changed into ano-

ther. Thou muſt oftentimes doe that which thou wouldeſt not, and leaue vndone that thou wouldeſt doe. That which is pleaſing to others, ſhall goe well forwards, that which thou wisheſt, ſhall not ſpeed. That which others ſay, ſhall be nothing regarded. Others ſhall aske, and ſhall receaue; thou ſhalt aske and not obtaine.

5. Others ſhall be great in the praiſes of men, but of thee there ſhal be no ſpeech; to others this or that ſhall be cõmitted, but thou ſhalt be accompted fit for nothing. At this, nature will ſomtimes repine, and it is much if thou endureſt it with ſilence. In theſe and ſuch like, a faithfull ſeruant of our Lord is wont to be tryed, how he can deny & ouercome himſelfe in all things. There is ſcarce any thing, wherin thou

haſt ſuch need to mortify thy ſelfe, as in ſeeing & ſuffering thoſe things that are contrary to thy will, eſpecially when that is commanded, which ſeemes to thee inconuenient, or to little purpoſe. And for that thou being placed vnder authority, dareſt not reſiſt a higher power, therfore it ſeemes hard to thee, to walke at the becke of another, & wholy to leaue thine owne opinion.

6. But conſider, Sonne, the fruit of theſe labours, the end neere at hand, and the reward aboue all meaſure, & thou shalt receaue noe griefe thereby, but greate comfort of thy patience. For euen for that little of thy will which now thou willingly forſakeſt, thou shalt alwaies haue thy will in heauen. There thou shalt haue al that thou wilt, or canſt deſire: there

thou shalt enioy all good, without feare of looſing it: there shall thy wil be euer one with me; it shall deſire no ſtrange or priuate thing; there noe mā shall withſtand thee, no man complaine of thee, noe man hinder thee, nothing come againſt thee: but al things deſired shal be there together preſent, & delight thy whole deſire, & fulfill it to the higheſt degree: there I will giue thee glory for the reproach which heere thou ſufferedſt; a garmēt of praiſe, for former griefe; for the loweſt place, a ſeat of an euerlaſting Kingdome; there shall the fruite of obedience appeare, the labour of pennance reioyce, and humble ſubiection shal be glorioufly crowned.

7. Now therfore, bow thy ſelfe with great humility vnder

the hands of all, and regard not who ſaid, or commanded this; but take great heed, that whether thy Superiour, or thy Inferiour, or thine equall require any thing of thee, or doe inſinuate their deſire, thou take it all in good part, and endeauour to fulfill it with a ſincere intention. Let one ſeek this, another that: one glory in this, an other in that, and be praiſed a thouſand thouſand times; but doe thou nether reioyce in this, nor in that, but in the contempt of thy ſelfe, and in my pleaſure and honnour alone. This art thou to wish, that whether by life or death, God may be alwaies glorified in thee.

CHAPT. L.

How a desolate person, ought to offer himselfe into the hands of God.

LOrd God, Holy Father, thy holy name be now and for euer blessed, because as thou wilt, so is it done, & what thou dost is good. Let thy seruant reioyce in thee, not in himselfe, nor any thing els, for thou alone, ô Lord, art the true gladnesse, thou art my hope and my crowne, thou art my ioy and my honour. What hath thy seruant, but what he hath receaued from thee, euen without any desert of his? Thine is all that thou hast giuen, and whatsoeuer thou hast made. I am poore and in labours from

my youth: and ſometimes my ſoule is heauy euen vnto teares, ſometimes alſo it is troubled in it ſelfe, by reaſon of the paſſions which riſe againſt it.

2. I deſire the ioy of peace, I craue the peace of thy children that are fed by thee in the light of comfort. If thou giue peace, if thou infuſe holy ioy, the ſoule of thy ſeruant ſhall be full of heauenly muſike, and ſhal become deuout in thy praiſe: but if thou withdraw thy ſelfe (as very often thou art wont) he will not be able to runne the waie of thy commandements, but rather he bowes his knees, and knockes his breaſt, for that it is not with him, as it was yeſterday, & theday before, when thy light ſhined vpon his head, &

he was protected vnder the shaddow of thy winges, from the temptatiõs which violently assaulted him.

3. Orighteous Father, & euer to be praised, the houre is come, that thy seruant is to be proued! Behold Father, it is fit that in this houre thy seruant suffer something for thee. O Father worthy of eternall honour, the houre is come (which from al eternity thou didest foreknow should come) that for a short tyme thy seruant should outwardly be oppressed, but inwardly liue for euer with thee: he should be a little despised & humbled, and made as an abiect in the sight of mẽ, and much afflicted with passions & infirmities, that he may rise againe with thee, in the rising of new light, and be clarified in heauen. Holy Father,

thou haſt ſo appointed it, and wilt haue it ſo, and this is fullfilled which thy ſelfe haſt commanded.

4. It is a grace and a fauour to thy friend to ſuffer, and to be afflicted in the world for the loue of thee, how often ſoeuer, & by whomſoeuer thou permiteſt it to fall vpon him. Without thy counſell and prouidence, and without cauſe, nothing is done in earth. It is good for me, Lord, that thou haſt humbled me, that I may learne thy righteous iudgements, and caſt away all haughtines of hart and preſumption. It is profitable to me, that shame hath couered my face, that I may rather ſeeke to thee for comfort, then to men. I haue learned allſo hereby, to dread thy inſcrutable iudgement, that afflicteſt the iuſt with the wic-

ked, kut not without equity and iuſtice.

5. I giue thee thankes, that thou haſt not ſpared my ſinnes, but haſt worne me away by bitter ſtirpes, inflicting ſorrowes, and ſending greeues, within and without. There is none vnder heauen that can comfort me, but thou my Lord God, the heauenly Phiſitian of ſoules, that ſtrikeſt and healeſt, bringeſt into hell, and draweſt out againe: let thy correction be vpon me, and let thy rod inſtruct me.

6. Behold, beloued Father, I am in thy hands, I bow my ſelfe vnder the rod of thy correction: let my neck and ſhoulders feele the ſtirpes of thy chaſtiſement, that my crookedneſſe my be conformed to thy wil. Make me a deuout and humble diſciple of thine, as

thou art wont well to doe, that I may be ready at euerie becke of thy diuine pleaſure. I commend my ſelfe & all mine to thee to be corrected. It is better to be rebuked here, then hereafter. Thou knoweſt all and euerie thinge, and there is nothing hidden in the conſcience of man, which can be hidden from thee. Before thinges are done, thou knoweſt that they will happen, and haſt no neede that any should teach thee, or admonish thee of thoſe things, which are done on earth. Thou knoweſt what is expedient for my good, and how much tribulation is fit for purging the ruſt of my ſinnes. Doe with me according to thy deſired pleaſure, & deſpiſe not my ſinful life, whom thou alone knowes better & more clearly then any.

7. Graunt me; Lord, to know that which is to be knowne; to loue that, which is to be beloued; to praſe that, which pleaſes thee moſt: to eſteeme that, which is precious vnto thee; to deſpiſe that which is contemptible in thy ſight: ſuffer me not, to iudge according to the ſight of the exteriour eies, nor to giue ſentence according to the hearing of the eares of ignorant men; but to determine of viſible & ſpiritual things with a true iudgment, & aboue al things euer to ſearch after thy wil and pleaſure.

8. The ſenſes of men are often deceaued in their iudgmēts, the louers of the world, are alſo deceaued in louing only viſible thinges. What is a man the better, for that he is eſteemed great by man? The de-

ceiptful man deceaues the deceiptful, the vaine the vaine, the blind deceaues the blind, & one feeble likewiſe another, whilſt he exaltes and praiſes him. For how much euery one is in thy ſight, ſo much he is, and noe more, ſaith humble S. Francis.

CHAPT. LI.

That a man ought to imploy himſelfe in workes of humilitie, when force is wanting for higher exerciſes.

SOnne, thou art not able alwaies to cõtinue in the feruent deſire of vertue, nor to perſiſt in the high pitch of contemplation, but thou muſt

ſometimes of neceſſity by reaſon of originall corruption, deſcend to inferiour things, and beare the burthen of this corruptible life euen againſt thy will, and with irkſomnes. As thou carrieſt a mortal body, ſo thou shalt feele trouble and heauines of hart. Thou oughteſt therefore in flesh, oftentimes to bewaile the burthen of flesh: for that thou canſt not alwaies perſeuere in ſpirituall exercciſes, and diuine contemplation.

2. It is then expedient for thee to fly to humble & exteriour works, and to refresh thy ſelfe with good & vertuous actions, to expect with a firme confidence my comming, and heauenly viſitation, to beare patiently thy banishment, and the drineſſe of thy mind, till thou bee viſited againe by me,

and deliuered from all anxiety. For I will make thee forget thy former paines, & enioy inward quietnes. I will lay open before thee, the pleasant fieldes of holy Scripture, that with an enlarged harte, thou maist begin to run the way of my commaundments. And thou shalt say, that the sufferings of this time are not condigne to the glory to come, that shall be reuealed in vs.

CHAPT. LII.

That man ought to esteeme himselfe vnworthy of comfort, worthy of stirpes.

LOrd, I am not worthy of thy comfort, nor of any spirituall visitation, and therfore thou leauest me poore and desolate.

desolate. For if I could shed teares like a sea, yet I were not, worthy of thy comfort. For (alas) I deserue nothing, but to be scourged and punished, in that I haue grieuously and often offended thee, and sinned in many thinges. Al things therfore duely consydered, I am not worthy enen of the least comfort. But thou mild & merciful God, who wilt not that thy workes doe perish, to shew the riches of thy goodnesse in the vessels of mercy, euen beyond his desert, vouchsafest to cõfort thy seruant aboue humane measure: for thy comforts are not like to the vaine words of men.

2. What haue I done, ô Lord, that thou shouldest impart any heauenly comfort to me? I remember not that I haue euer done any good, but haue bene

alwaies prone to ſinne, and ſlouthful in my amendment It is true, and I cannot deny it. If I ſhould ſay otherwiſe, thou wouldeſt ſtand againſt me, and there would be none to defend me. What haue I deſerued for my ſinnes, but hel and euerlaſting fire? I confeſſe in the truth of my hart, that I am worthy of all ſcorne and contempt, and it is vnfit that I ſhould be remembred amongſt thy deuout ſeruants. And although I be vnwilling to heare this, yet notwithſtanding for the loue of truth, I will lay open my ſinnes againſt my ſelfe, that I may the better deſerue to obtaine thy mercy.

3. What ſhall I ſay being guilty, and full of confuſion? I can vtter out of my mouth no other worde, but this; I haue ſinned, Lord, I haue ſinned,

haue mercie on me : pardon me, ſuffer me a little, that I may bewaile my griefe, before I go vnto the land of darknes, & be couered with the shaddow of death. What doeſt thou require of a guilty and miſerable ſinner, but that he be contrite and ſorrowfull, & humble himſelfe for his offences? In true contrition and humblenes of harte, is bred hope of forgiuenes; a troubled conſcience is reconciled againe, grace loſt is reſtored, man is defended from future wrath, and God & the penitent ſoule, meet together in the holy kiſſe of peace.

4. Humble contrition for ſinnes is an acceptable ſacrifice vnto thee ô Lord!, ſauouring much ſweeter in thy ſight then burning frankincenſe. This is alſo the pleaſant ointment,

which thou wouldeſt haue powred vpon thy ſacred feet, thou neuer deſpiſeſt a contrite &humble hart. There, is a place of refuge from the face of the wrath of our enemy: there, is amended, & washed away whatſoeuer vncleanes hath bene elſwher gathered, and whatſoeuer is defiled.

CHAPT. LIII.

That the grace of God is not giuen to thoſe that ſauour of earthly things.

SOnne, my grace is precious, it ſufferes not it ſelfe to be mingled with externall things, nor earthly comforts. Thou oughteſt therfore to caſt away al hinderances of grace, if thou deſire to receaue the infuſion

therof. Chooſe therfore a ſecret place to thy ſelfe, loue to liue alone with thy ſelfe, deſire the conuerſation of none: but rather powre out deuout praiers to God, that thou maiſt keepe thy mind compunct, & thy conſcience pure. Eſteeme the whole world as nothing: preferre my ſeruice before all outward thinges: for thou canſt not attend to me, and be delighted alſo in tranſitory vanities. Thou oughteſt to ſequeſter thy ſelfe from thy acquaintance & friends, & to keep thy mind depriued of all temporall comfort. So the bleſſed Apoſtle Peter required, that the faithfull of Chriſt ſhould keepe themſelues as ſtrangers & Pilgrims in this world.

2. O how great a confidence ſhall he haue at the houre of death, whom the affection to

any earthly things detaines in the world. But the weake minde is not yet capable of ſo retired a hart; nether doth the fleshly perſon, vnderſtand the freedome of a recollected mind. Notwithſtanding if he wilbe truly ſpirituall, he ought to renoũce as well that which is farre off, as that which is neereſt vnto him, & to keware of no man more then of himſelfe. If thou perfectly ouercome thy ſelfe, thou shalt with more eaſe ſubdue the reſt. It is a glorious victory to triumphe ouer our ſelues. For he that keepes himſelfe ſubiect, in ſuch ſort that his ſenſuality be ſubdued to reaſon, & reaſon in al things be obedient to me, he is truly a conquerour of himſelfe, and Lord of the world.

3. If thou deſire to mount vnto this height of perfection,

thou muſt begin manfully, and ſet the axe to the root, that thou maiſt plucke vp & deſtroy thy hidden and inordinat inclination to thy ſelfe, and to all priuate and earthly good. Of this vice (that man too inordinatly loues himſelfe) almoſt all dependes, whatſoeuer is wholy to be ouercome and ſubdued, which being ouercome ād vāguished, there will presētly enſue great peace and tranquility. But for that few endeauour perfectly to dye vnto themſelues, & to forſake themſelues wholy, therfore they remaine intangled in themſelues, and cannot be lifted vp in ſpirit aboue themſelues; but he that deſires to walke freely with me, it is neceſſary that he mortifie all his inordinate affectiōs, & not adheare to any creature by priuate loue.

CHAPT. LIV.

Of the different motions of Nature, and grace.

Sonne, marke diligently the motions of nature, and grace; for in a very contrary and ſecret manner theſe are moued, and can hardly be diſcerned, but by him that is ſpirituall & inwardly enlightned. All men deſire that which is good, & pretend ſome good in al their words and deedes; and therfore vnder pretẽce of good, many are deceaued. Nature is deceiptful and ſeduces, and deceaues many, and alwaies propoſes herſelfe for her ende, but grace walkes with great ſincerity, & auoides all shew of euill, pretendes not deceipts,

but doth all things purely for God, in whom also she finally restes.

2. Nature will not willingly dy, nor be kept in, nor be euercome, nor be subiect to any, nor be subdued: but grace laboures to mortify her self, resistes sẽsuallity, seekes to be subiect, is willing to be ouercome, and will not vse her owne liberty: she loues to be kept vnder discipline, and desires not to rule any, but alwaies to liue & remaine wholie subiect to God; & for God, is readly humbly to bow to all men. Nature striues for her owne commodity, and consideres what profit she may reape by another: but grace consideres not what is profitable to manie. Nature willingly receaues honour and reuerence: but grace faithfully attributes all honour

and glory to God.

3. Nature feares shame, and contempt, but grace reioyceth to ſuffer reproach for the name of Ieſus. Nature loues idlenes, and bodily reſt, but grace cannot be idle, but willingly imbraces labour. Nature ſeekes to haue thoſe things that be curious and precious, abhorres that which is meane and baſe: but grace delightes in plaine and humble things, deſpiſes not courſe and meane, nor refuſes to weare that which is old and torne. Nature reſpects the things of this world, reioyces at earthly gain, ſorrowes for loſſe, is moued with euery little iniurious word: but grace thinkes on that, which is euerlaſting, and cleaues not to that which fades with time; she is not troubled with loſſe, nor exaſperated with iniuries, for

that she hath placed her treasure and ioy in heauen, where nothing doth perish.

4. Nature is couetous, and doth more willingly receaue then giue, she loues proper and priuate things; but grace is pious and common to all, auoydes singularity, is content with a little, thinkes it happier to giue, then to receaue. Nature inclines to creatures, to her owne flesh, to vanities, and to discourses: but grace drawes to God, and seekes after vertues, renounces creatures, flies the world, hates desires of the flesh, restraines wandring abroad, blushes to be seene in publike. Nature is willing to haue some outward comfort, wherin she may delight her senses, but grace seekes comfort in God alone, and delightes aboue al visible things in the highest good.

5. Nature workes all for her owne gaine and profit, she cā doe nothing freely, but for beſtowed benefits: she hopes to obtaine ether that which is equall, or better, ether praiſe or fauour: and couetes to haue her workes & gifts much eſteemed: but grace ſeekes no temporall thinge, nor askes any other reward for her deſertes thē God alone; nor deſires more of temporall neceſſaries, then what may ſerue her for the obtaining of euerlaſting glory.

6. Nature reioyces to haue many friendes, and kinsfolkes, she glories in noble birth and deſcent, pleaſes the powerfull, fawnes vpō the rich, applaudes thoſe that are like herſelfe: but grace loues her enemies, and is not puffed vp with multitude of friendes, nor eſteemes place or birth, but where it is ioyned

with greater vertue, she rather fauours the poore, then the rich, hath more compaſſion of the innocent, then the powerfull, reioyces in the ſimple, and reſpectes not the deceiptfull, exhortes euer the good to labour for the better gifts, and by vertue to reſemble the Sonne of God. Nature quickly complaines of any wãt, and trouble: grace conſtantly ſufferes al kind of need.

7 Nature turnes all thinges to her ſelfe, ſtriues and contendes for herſelfe: but grace reduces all to God, from whẽce originally they proceed: she aſcribes no good to her ſelfe, neither doth she arrogantly preſume of her ſelfe, she contendes not, nor preferres her opinion before others, but in euery ſenſe and vnderſtandinge, ſubmittes her ſelfe to the eternall wiſe-

dome, and to the diuine iudgement. Nature couetes to know ſecrets, and to heare newes, she will appeare abroad, and make proofe of many thinges by the experience of her owne ſenſes, she deſires to be knowne, and to do thoſe things for which she may be praiſed and admired: but grace cares not for hearing newes, nor to vnderſtand curious matter, for that all this ſpringes from the ancient diſorder of our corrupt nature, ſeeing nothing is newe, and durable vpō earth. She teaches therefore to reſtraine the sēſes, to auoid vaine pleaſing & oſtētation, humbly to hide thoſe things that are worthy of praiſe and admiration, and of euery thing & euery knowledge, to ſeeke profitable fruite, and the praiſe and honour of God: she will not haue her

felf nor hers publickly praiſed, but deſires that God ſhould be bleſſed in his giftes, who of meere charity beſtowes all things.

8. This grace is a ſupernall light, and a certaine ſpeciall gift of God, and the proper marke of the elect, and pledge of euerlaſting ſaluation, which lifts vp a ma from earthly baſenes, to loue of heauēly things and of a carnall makes him a ſpirituall perſon. How much the more therfore, nature is depreſſed & ſubdued ſo much the greater grace is infuſed, and the inward man daily by new viſitations, more perfected according to the Image of God.

CHAPT. LV.

Of the corruption of Nature, & efficacey of diuine Grace.

O Lord my God, who of thy meere goodnes haſt created me to thy Image & likeneſſe, graunt me this grace which thou haſt shewed to be ſo great, and ſo neceſſary to ſaluation, that I may ouercome my wicked nature, which dtawes me to ſinne, & to the loſſe of my ſoule. For I feele in my flesh the law of ſin, contradicting the law of my mind, and leading me captiue, to obey ſenſuality in many things: neither can I reſiſt the paſſions thereof, vnleſſe thy holy grace feruently infuſed into my hart doe aſſiſt me.

2. Thy

2. Thy grace ô Lord,& great grace is needfull, that nature may be ouercome, which is euer prone to euill from her youth. For by Adam the firſt man, it falling and being corrupted by ſinne, the penalty of this ſtaine hath deſcended vpō all mankind,in ſuch ſort, that nature it ſelfe, which by thee was created good & without defect, is now accompted for vice, and for the infirmity of a corrupted nature, for that the motion therof left vnto it ſelfe, drawes to euill and abiect things. For the little force which remaines, is like a certaine ſparke, lying hidden in ashes. Thus is naturall reaſon it ſelfe compaſſed about with great darkneſſe, ſtill retayning power, to diſcerne good and euill, and the diſtāce betweene true and falſe, although it be

vnable to fulfill all that it approues: and enioyes not now the ful light of truth, nor the former integrity of her affections.

3. Hence it is, my God, that according to my inward man, I delight in thy law, knowing thy commandements to be good, iuſt, and holy; reprouing alſo all euill and ſinne, and doe know that it is to be fled. But in my flesh I ſerue the law of ſin, whilſt I rather obey ſenſuality then reaſon. Hence it is that I haue a will to doe good, but know not how to performe it. For this cauſe I often purpoſe many good things, but for that I want grace to help my infirmity, for a light reſiſtance I go back, and faint. I know the way of perfection & ſee cleerly inough what I ought to doe, but preſſed with

the weight of mine owne corruption, I rise not vnto it.

4 O Lord, how needfull is thy grace for me, to begin any good worke, to go forward, and to accomplish it. For without it I can doe nothing, but in thee I can do al things, when thy grace doth comfort me. O heauenly grace, without which out owne merits are nothing, and no gifts of nature are to be esteemed! Arts, riches, beauty, & strength, wit, or eloquence, are of noe worth with thee, ô Lord, without thy grace. For gifts of nature are common to good and euill, but the peculiar gift of the elect is grace and loue, wherwith being marked, they are esteemed worthy of euerlasting life. This grace so much excelles, that neither the gifte of prophesy, nor the working of miracles, nor any spe-

culation how high ſoeuer, is of any eſteeme without it. Neither faith, nor hope, nor other vertues, are acceptable to thee without charity & grace.

5. O moſt bleſſed grace, that makes the poore in ſpirit, rich with vertues, and the rich in many bleſſings humble in hart, come downe vnto me, replenish me in the morning with thy cõfort, leaſt my ſoule should faint with wearines, and wither away with drineſſe of mind. I beſeech thee Lord, that I may find grace in thy ſight which alone ſufficeth, though deſires be wanting. If I be other things that nature tempted and vexed with many tribulations, I will not feare euills, whilſt thy grace is with me: she is my ſtrength, she giues aduiſe and helpe: she is ſtronger then all the wiſe.

6. Thy grace is the mistresse of truth, the teacher of discipline, the light of the hart, the solace in affliction: she driues away sorrow, she expelles feare, she is the nurse of deuotion, the bringer forth of teares. What am I without it, but a rotten peece of wood, and an vnprofitable stalke only meete for the fire? Let thy grace therfor, Lord, alwaies preuent me, & follow me, & make me euer diligent in good works, through Iesus-Christ thy Sonne, Amen.

CHAPT. LVI.

That we ought to deny our ſelues, and imitate Chriſt, by the Croſſe.

SOnne, looke how much thou canſt go out of thy ſelf, ſo much maiſt thou enter into me. As to be voide of all deſire of externall things, makes inward perce; ſo the forſaking of our ſelues, ioynes, vs internally to God. I will haue thee learne the perfect leauing of thy ſelfe to my will, without contradiction & complaint. Follow me, I am the way, the truth and the life. Without the way there is no going, without truth ther is no knowledge; without life there is no liuing. I am the way which thou

oughteſt to follow, the truth which thou oughteſt to hope. I am the way which cannot lead amiſſe, the truth which cannot erre, the life which cannot end. I am a moſt ſtrait way, a ſupreame truth, a true life, a bleſſed life, an increated life. If thou remaine in me, thou ſhalt apprehend euerlaſting life.

2. If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandements: if thou wilt know the truth, beleeue me. If thou wilt be perfect, ſell all. If thou wilt be my diſciple, deny thy ſelfe. If thou wilt poſſeſſe a bleſſed life, deſpiſe this preſent life. If thou wilt be exalted in heauen, humble thy ſelfe vpon earth. If thou wilt raigne with me, beare the croſſe with me. For only the ſeruants of the croſſe, finde the way of

b.iſſe and true light

3. Lord Ieſus, foraſmuch as thy way is narrow, ſtrait & cõtemptible vnto the world, graũt me grace to imitate thee in ſuffering willingly all wordly contempt. For the ſeruant is not greater then his Lord, nor the Diſciple aboue his Maiſter. Lett thy ſeruant be exerciſed in thy life, for there is the health & the true ſanctity of my ſoule, whatſoeuer I read or heare beſids, doth not recreate or delight me fully.

4. Sonne, now that thou knoweſt and haſt read theſe thinges, happy shalt thou be, if thou fulfill them. He that hath my commandements and keepes them, he it is that loues me, and I will loue him, and will manifeſt my ſelfe vnto him, and will make him ſit with me in the Kingdome of

my Father. Lord Ieſus, as thou haſt ſaid and promiſed, ſo giue me grace to deſerue, that it be fulfilled. I haue receaued the Croſſe, I haue receaued it from thy hande, and I will beare it, and beare it till death, as thou haſt laid it vpon me. Truly the life of a good munke, is the croſſe, but it is a ſure guide to heauen. It is now begunne, it is not lawful to go back, neither is it fit to leaue it.

5. Let vs then take courage my brethren, aud go forwards together. Ieſus willbe with vs, for Ieſus ſake we haue vndertakē this croſſe: for the loue of Ieſus let vs perſeuere to beare the croſſe. He will be our helper, who is our guid & forerunner. Behold our King goes before vs, who alſo will fight for vs: let vs follow him cheerfully, let

vs not be diſmaied but be ready to dy with courage in the battaile, & let vs not blemish our glory, by flying from the Croſſe.

CHAPT. LVII.

That a man be not too much dejected, when he falles into ſome defect.

SOnne, patience & humility in time of aduerſity, are more pleaſing to me thē much comfort and deuotion in proſperity. Why art thou grieued for euery little trifle ſpoken and done againſt thee? Although it had bene much more, thou oughteſt not to haue bene moued. But now let it paſſe, it is not the firſt that hath happened, nor any new thing; nether

shal it be the laſt, if thou liue long. Thou art manly inough, as long as noe aduerſity occurres. Thou canſt giue good counſell alſo, & canſt ſtrengthen others with thy words; but when any tribulation ſuddainly knockes at thy doore, thou art deſtitute of counſell, and voyd of force. See therfore thy greate frailty, which thou oſtē proueſt in euery ſmale occaſion. It is notwithſtanding permitted for thy good, when theſe and ſuch like occaſions befall thee.

2. Put it out of thy hart the beſt thou canſt, and if it touch thee, yet let it not deiect thee, nor trouble thee long: beare it at leaſt patiently, if thou cāſt not ioyfully. Although thou be vnwilling to heare it, and feeleſt in thy harte ſome motion of diſdaine, yet r preſſe thy

ſelfe, and ſuffer no inordinate word to paſſe out of thy mouth, which may be a ſcandal to the weake. The ſtorme which now is raiſed, ſhall quickly be appeaſed; & inward griefe ſhall be aſſwaged by the rerurne of grace. I doe yet liue, ſaith our Lord, and am ready to helpe thee, and to giue thee greater comfort then before, if thou put thy truſt in me, and deuoutly calleſt vpon me.

3. Be more patient, and prepare thy ſelfe to greater ſuffering. All is not loſt if thou feele thy ſelfe often afflicted, or greeuouſly tempted. Thou art a mā, and not God: thou art flesh, not an Angel. How canſt thou looke to continue euer in the ſame ſtate of vertue, when an Angell in heauen fell, and the firſt man in Paradiſe loſt his ſtanding? I am he that doe giue

healthfull comfort to them that mourne, and doe raiſe vp to my Godhead, thoſe that know their owne frailty.

4. Lord, bleſſed be thy ſacred worde, more ſweet vnto my mouth then the hony, and the hony combe. What should I doe in theſe my ſo great tribulations & anguish, vnleſſe thou didſt comfort me with thy holy, ſweet, and heauēly ſpeeches? What matter is it, how much, and what I ſuffer, ſo as I may at length attaine to the heauen of bliſſe? Grāt me a good end. graūt me a happy paſſage out of this world. Be mindfull of me, my God, and direct me the ſtraight and ready way to thy euerlaſting Kingdome. Amen.

CHAPT, LVIII.

Of not ſearching into high matters, & into the ſecret iudgments of God.

SOnne, beware thou diſpute not of high matters, nor of the ſecret iudgments of God, why this man is forſaken, and he aſſumed to ſo great grace: why alſo this man is ſo much afflicted, and he ſo greatly aduanced. Theſe things exceed all humane power, neither can any reaſon or diſcourſe of any man ſearch out the iudgement of God. When the enemy therfore ſuggeſtes theſe things to thee, or ſome enuious people demand them of thee, anſwere that of the Prophet: Thou art iuſt, ô Lord, and thy iudge-

ment is right. And againe: The iudgements of our Lord are true and iuſtified in themſelues. My iudgements are to be feared, not to be diſcuſſed, for they are ſuch as cannot be comprehended by the vnderſtanding of man.

2. In like manner I aduiſe thee not to iniquire nor diſpute of the merits of the Saints, which of them is holier then the other, & which is greater in the kingdome of heauen. Theſe thinges oftētimes breed ſtrife and vnprofitable contentions, they nourish alſo pride and vaine glory, from whence doe vſually ſpring enuy & diſſentions, whilſt one will needs foolishly haue this Saint preferred; & the other, another. To deſire to know and ſearch out ſuch things, is to noe purpoſe, but to diſpleaſe the Saints,

of whom they ſpeake. For I am not the God of diſſenſion but of peace, which peace conſiſtes rather in true humility, then in exalting our ſelues.

3. Some are carried with zeale of affection to loue theſe or thoſe moſt, but this loue is rather humaine, then diuiue. I haue made all the Saints, and haue giuen them grace: I haue made them partaker of my glory, I know the merits of euery one, I haue preuented them in the benedictions of my ſweetnes. I foreknew my beloued, before the beginning of the world. I choſe them out of the world, they choſe not me firſt. I called them by grace, I drew them by mercy, I led them through ſundry temptations. I haue ſent them great inward comforts. I haue giuen them perſeuerance. I haue crowned

crowned their patience.

4. I know the first and last: I imbrace all with inestimable loue. I am to be praised in al my Saints: I am to be blessed aboue all things, and to be honoured in euery one whom I haue thus gloriously exalted, and predestinated without any preceedẽt merits of their owne. He therfore that contemnes one of the least of my Saints, honoures not the greatest, for that I made both the lesse & the greater. And he that dispraises any of my Saints, dispraises also me and all the rest. In the Kingdome of heauen. All are one by the band of Charity, they thinke the same, they wil the same, and are all knit together in one perfect band of loue.

5. But yet (which is much more high) they loue me more

then themſelues, and more thē their owne merits. For being rauished aboue themſelues, and drawne out of the affection of themſelues, they tend wholy to the loue of me, in which alſo they reſt, enioying me with vnſpeakable glory. Nothing can put them backe, nothing preſſe them downe; for being full of euerlaſting truth, they burne with the fire of vnquenchable charity. Let therfore carnall and earthly men, that can affect no other but priuate ioyes, forbeare to diſpute of the ſtate of Saints. They adde and take away according to their owne fancies, not as it pleaſes the euerlaſting Truth.

9. There is in many great ignorance, ſpecially in thoſe that be ſlenderly enlightned; & theſe can ſeldome loue any with perfect ſpirituall loue.

They are alwaies much drawn by a natural affection, and humane friendship to this man or to that, and according to the experience they haue of themselues in their earthlie affections, so they frame an imagination of heauenly things. But there is an incomparable distance betweene the thinges, which the imperfect frame in their cõceipts, and those which illuminated persons do see by reuelation from aboue.

7. Beware therfore, my Sõne, that thou treat not curiously of these thinges, which exceed thy knowledge, but rather so apply thy endeauour, that thou maist at least haue the meaneft place in the Kingedome of heauen. And if any one did knowe which of the Saincts exceeded others in Sanctity, or who is esteemed greater in the

Kingedome of heauen, what would this knowledge auaile him, vnleſſe he should thereby humble himſelfe the more in my ſight, and ſtirre vp his mind to praiſe my name with greater feruour. His labour is much more acceptable to God, that thinkes of the greatnes of his ſinnes, and his want of vertues, and how far off he his from the perfection of the Saints, then he that diſputes of their greatnes. It is better to praye to the Saints with deuotion, and teares, & to craue their glorious ſuffrages with an humble mind, then to ſearch their ſecrets with vaine curioſity.

8. They are wel & right well contented, if men could content themſelues, and refraine from theſe vaine diſcourſes. They glorie not of their owne

merits, for they aſcribe no good to themſelues, but attribut al to me, who of my infinite charity, haue beſtowed my bleſſings vpon them. They are repleniſhed with ſo great loue of my Godhead, and ſo ſuperabounddant ioy, that there is no glory nor happines, that is, or can be wanting to them. All the Saints, how much the higher they be in glory, ſo much the more humble they are in themſelues, and neer and neerer vnto me. And therfore thou haſt it written. That they did caſt their Crownes before God, and fell downe vpon their face before the Lambe, and adored him that liues for euer.

9 Many inquire who is greateſt in the Kingedome of God, that knowe not whether they ſhall euer be numbred there amonſt the leaſt. It is no ſmall

matter to be euen the leaſt in heauen, where al are great: for that all there shall be called ād shalbe indeed the ſonnes of God. The leaſt there shall be great among thouſands, and the ſinner of a hundred years shall die. For when the Diſciples asked who was greater in the Kingdome of heauen, they receaued this anſwere. Vnleſſe you be conuerted, &become as little children you, shall not enter into the Kingdome of heauen. Whoſoeuer therfore shall humble himſelfe as this little child, he is the greater in the Kingdome of heauen.

10. Woe be to them that diſdaine to humble themſelues willingly with little children. For the lowe gate of the Kingdome of heauen, will not giue them entrance. And woe be to

the rich, that haue their comforts here, for whilst the poore enter into the kingdome of God, they shall be wayting without. Reioyce you that be humble: & you that be poore, be you glad, for yours is the kingdome of God, if you walke according to truth.

CHAPT. LIX.

That all our hope and trust is to be fixed in God alone

LOrd, what trust haue I in this world? Or what is the greatest comfort that all things vnder heauen do yeild me? Is it not thou, my Lord God, whose mercies are without number? Where hath it bene well with me, without thee? Or when could it be ill with me, when

thou wert preſent? I had rather be poore for thee, then rich without thee. I rather chooſe to be a Pilgrime in earth with thee, then to poſſeſſe heauen without thee. Wher thou art, there is heauen: and there is death and hell, where thou art not. Thou art my deſire, and therfore it behoues me to ſend forth deep ſighes frō my hart, and crie & pray vnto thee. For I haue none to truſt vnto, none that can helpe me in time of neceſſity, but thou alone, my God. Thou art my hope, and my truth; thou art my comforter, and moſt faithfull vnto me in all my diſtreſſes.

2. All men ſeeke their owne gaine; thou only ſeekeſt my ſaluation and my profit, and turneſt all things to my good. Although thou permitteſt many temptations to aſſault me,

and many aduerſities to befal me, yet thou ordaineſt all this to my good and profit, who art wont to proue thy beloued ſeruants a thouſand waies. In which proofe thou oughteſt no leſſe to be loued and praiſed, thē if thou diddeſt replenish me with heauenlie comforts.

3. In thee therfore, my Lord God, I put my whole hope and refuge: in thee I place my tribulation and anguish, for I finde all to be weake and vnconſtant, whatſoeuer I behold out of thee. For nether can many friendes auaile, nor forcible helpers aide, nor wiſe counſelours giue profitable anſwere, nor the bookes of the learned, comfort, nor any wealth deliuer, nor any ſecret, or pleaſant place defend, if thou thy ſelfe doeſt not aſſiſt, helpe, cōfort, inſtructe, and keepe vs.

4. For all things that ſeeme to be ordayned for the reſt and ſolace of man, when thou art abſent, are nothing, and do bring indeede no ioy, nor comfort at all. Thou therfore art the end of all that is good, the hight of life, the depth of wiſdome: and the moſt forcible comfort of thy ſeruants, is to truſt in thee aboue all thinges. To thee therfore doe I lift myne eyes: In thee my God, the Father of mercies, I put my whole truſt. Bleſſe and ſanctify my ſoule with thy heauenly bleſſings, that it may be made thy holy habitation, & the ſeat of thy eternall glory: & that nothing may be found in the temple of thy greatnes, that may offend the eyes of thy Maieſty. According to the greatneſſe of thy goodneſſe, and multitude of thy mercies, take pitty

vpon me, and heare the prayer of thy poore ſeruāt, who is farr exiled from thee in the land of the shaddow of death. Protect and keepe the ſoule of thy ſeruant, amidſt ſo many dangers of this corruptible life, and by the aſſiſtance of thy grace, direct it in the way of peace, to the country of euerlaſting light, Amen.

THE FOVRTH BOOKE

A deuout Exhortation to the bleſſed Sacrament.

The voyce of Chriſt.

COme vnto me al yee that labour and are burdened, and I will refresh you, ſaith our Lord. The breade which I will giue, is my fleshe, for the life of the world. Take yee and eate, this is my body that shall be deliuered for you. Doe this for the commemoration of me. He

that eates my flesh, and drinkes my bloud, remaines in me, and I in him. The words which I haue spoken to you, are spirit and life.

CHAPT. I.

With how great reuerence Christ ought to be receaued.

THese are thy wordes O Christ, euerlasting Truth, though not spoken all at one time, nor written in one and the selfe same place. Because therefor they are thine and true, they are all thankefully and faithfully to be receaued by me. They are thine, & thou hast spoken them, and they are mine also, because thou hast spoken them for my saluation. I willingly receaue them from

thy mouth, that they may be the deeper imprinted in my hart. Theſe deuout wordes ſo full of ſweetneſſe and loue, doe ſtirre me vp; but mine owne offences doe amaze me, and my impure conſcience driues me backe from the receauing of ſo great myſteries. The ſweetneſſe of thy wordes doth encourage me; but the multitude of my ſinnes doe oppreſſe me.

2. Thou commandeſt me to come confidently vnto thee, if I will haue part with thee: and to receaue the food of immortality, if I deſire to obtaine euerlaſting life and glory. Come, ſayſt thou, vnto me, all yee that labour & are burdened, and I will refreſh you. O ſweet and louely word in the eare of a ſinner, that thou my Lord God shouldeſt inuite the poore and

needy, to receaue thy moſt bleſſed body. But who am I Lord, that I may preſume to approach vnto thee? behold the heauens cannot containe thee, and thou ſayſt: Come yee all vnto me.

3. What meanes this moſt pious benignity, and louinge inuitation? How shall I dare to come, that know not any good in me, wherevpon I may preſume: How shall I bring thee into my houſe, that haue often offended thy moſt gracious countenance? The Angels and the Archangels honour thee, the Saints and iuſt men do feare thee; and thou ſaiſt, Come yee all vnto me. Vnleſſe thou O Lord dideſt ſay it, who would beleeue it to be true? And vnleſſe thou didſt commaund it, who would dare to come vnto thee. Behold

Noe a iuſt man laboured a hũdred yeares in the buildinge of the Arke, that he might be ſaued with a few: and how can I in one houres ſpace prepare my ſelfe to receaue the maker of the world with reuerence?

4 Moyſes thy great ſeruant, and eſpeciall friend, made an Arke of incorruptible woode, which he alſo couered with moſt pure gold, to put the Tables of the Law therein: and I a rotten creature, how ſhall I ſo lightly dare to receaue the maker of the Law, and the giuer of life? Salomon the wiſeſt of the kings of Iſrael, beſtowed ſeauen yeares in building a magnificent Temple, in praiſe of thy name, and celebrated the feaſt of the Dedication thereof eight daies together, he offered a thouſand peaceable ſacrifices, and ſet the Arke in a

place

prepared for it, with the ſound of trumpets, and of ioy: and I the moſt vnhappy & poroeſt of men, how shall I bringe thee into my houſe, that can ſcarce ſpend one halfe houre deuoutlie? and I would to God, it were once almoſt one halfe houre, in worthy and due manner!

5. O my God, how much did they endeauour ro pleaſe thee, and alas how little is that which I doe? How short time doe I ſpend, when I prepare my ſelfe to receaue? I am ſeldome wholy recollected, very ſeldome altogether free from diſtractiō, and yet ſurely noe vndecent thought should occure in the preſence of thy Deity, not any creature draw me vnto it: for I am not to harbour an Angell, but the Lord of Angels.

6. And yet there is great dif-

ference betweene the Arke and the Reliques therof, & thy moſt pure body with its vnſpeakable vertues : betweene thoſe legall ſacrifices , figures of future things , and the true Sacrifice of thy body , the cõplement of all anciẽt Sacrifices. Why therfore doe I not become more feruent in thy venerable preſence ? Wherfore doe I not prepare my ſelfe with greater care to receaue thy ſacred gifts, ſith thoſe holy ancient Patriarches , and Prophetes , yea kings alſo & Princes, with the whole people , haue shewed ſo great zeale of deuotion to thy diuine ſeruice ?

7. The moſt deuout king Dauid , daunced before the Arke of God with all his force, calling to mind the benefits beſtowed in times paſt vpon his Forefathers. He made In-

ſtruments of ſundry kinds, he published Pſalmes, and appointed them to be ſung with ioy: himſelfe alſo oftentimes played vpon the harpe. Being inſpired with the grace of the holy Ghoſt, he taught the people of Iſrael to praiſe God with their whole hart, ād with pleaſant voices, euery day to bleſſe & praiſe him. If ſo great deuotion was then vſed, & ſuch memory of diuine praiſe before the Arke of the Teſtament, what reuerence and deuotion is now to be performed by me and all Chriſtian people, in the preſence of this Sacrament, in receauing the moſt pretious body of Chriſt?

8. Many go to ſundry places to viſit the reliques of Saints, & are aſtonished when they heare of their miraculous works: they behold the ſpa-

cious buldinges of their Churches, & kiſſe their ſacred bones wrapped in ſilke &golde. And behold thou art neerly preſent with me on the altar, my God, the Holy of Holies, the maker of all things, and Lord of Angels, Oftentimes in thoſe deuotions there is but curioſity of men, and nouelty of the beholders in the ſeeing of ſuch ſights, and little fruit of amendment is gotten thereby, eſpecially where there is ſo vnconſtant a wandringe without true contrition. But here in the Sacrament of the altar, thou art wholy preſent, my Lord, God and Man, Chriſt Ieſus; where alſo plentifull fruit of euerlaſting ſaluation is obtained, as often as thou art worthily, & deuoutly, receaued. No leuity, no curioſity, or ſenſuality drawes vnto this, but

firme faith, deuout hope, and sincere charity

9. O God the inuisible Creatour of the world, how wonderfully doest thou deale with vs! how sweetly & graciously dost thou dispose of all thinges with thy elect, to whom thou offerest thy selfe to be receaued in the Sacrament! O this exceedes al vnderstanding of mā: this chiefly drawes the harts of the deuout, and inflames their desire. For thy true faithfull seruantes that dispose their whole life to amendement, by this most worthy Sacrament, oftentimes receaue great grace of deuotion, and loue of vertue.

10. O admirable and hidden grace of this Sacrament, which only the faithfull of Christ doe know: but the vnfaithfull

ull, and ſuch as are ſlaues vnto ſinne, cannot conceaue nor feele. In this Sacrament ſpirituall grace is giuen, and loſt vertue is reſtored in the ſoule: and beauty disfigured by ſinne, returnes againe. This grace is ſometimes ſo great, that with the fulneſſe of deuotion, which is here giuen, not only the mind, but the weake body alſo feeles great increaſe of ſtrength.

11. Our coldneſſe and negligence ſurely is much to be bewailed and pittied, that we are not drawne with greater affection to receaue Chriſt in whom all the hope and merit of thoſe that are to be ſaued doth conſiſt. For he is our ſanctification and redemption, he is the comfort of paſſengers, and the euerlaſting fruition of ſaints. It is much therfore to be la-

mented, that many doe so little consider this comfortable mystery, which reioyces heauen, & preserues the Whole world. O blindnes and hardnes of mans hart, that doth not more deeply weigh the greatnes of so vnspeakeable a gift, but rather by the daily vse therof, comes to regard it little or nothing.

12. For if this most holy Sacrament, should be celebrated in one place only, and consecrated by one only Priest in the world, with how great desire, dost thou thinke, would men be affected to that place, and what esteeme would they haue of such a Priest of Almighty God, by whom they myght enioy the consolation of these diuine mysteries? but now there are many Priests, and Christ is offered vp in ma-

ny placees, that ſo the grace and loue of God to man, may appeare ſo much the greater, how much the more this ſacred Cõmunion is diſperſed through the worlde, Thanks be to thee, good Ieſu, euerlaſting Paſtour of our ſoules, that haſt vouchſafed to refresh vs poore & banished men, with thy precious Body and Bloud, ād ſo inuite vs to the receauing of theſe myſteries with the wordes of thy owne mouth, ſayinge: Come vnto me all yee that labour and are burdened, and I wil refresh you.

CHAP. II.

That the great goodneſſe and charity of God is beſtowed vpon man in this Sacrament.

The voice of the Diſciple.

PReſuming of thy goodneſſe and great mercy, ô Lord, being ſicke, I approach vnto my Sauiour, hungry and thirſty to the fountaine of life, needy to the kinge of heauen, a ſeruant to my Lord, a creature to my Creator, deſolate to my mercifull cõforter. But whẽce is this to me, that thou vouchſafeſt to come to me? Who am I that thou shouldeſt giue thy ſelfe to me? How dare a ſinner preſume to appeare before

thee? And thou, how doſt thou vouchſafe to come vnto a ſinner? Thou knoweſt thy ſeruant, and ſeeſt that he hath no good thinge in him, for which thou shouldeſt beſtow this benefit vpon him. I confeſſe therfore my vnworthineſſe, and I acknowledge thy goodneſſe: I praiſe thy mercy, & giue thee thāks for this thy vnſpeakable charity. For thou doſt this for thine owne goodneſſe, not for any merits of mine, to the end that thy goodneſſe may be better knowne vnto me, charity more aboundantly shewen, and thy humility more highlie commended. Since therfore it is thy pleaſure, and thou haſt commanded that it should be ſo, this thy bounty is alſo pleaſinge to me, and I wish that my offences my be no hinderance.

2. O moſt ſweet and bountifull Ieſu, how great reuerẽce & thanks, with perpetuall praiſe, is due vnto thee for the receauing of thy ſacred body, whoſe worth & dignity no mã is able to expreſſe! But what shal I thinke of at this time, now that I am to receaue this diuine Sacrament, and to approach vnto my Lord, to whõ I am not able to giue due reuerẽce, and yet I deſire to receaue him deuoutly? What can I thinke better & more profitable, then to humble my ſelfe wholy before thee, and to exalt thy infinite goodneſſe aboue me! I praiſe thee my God, and I wil exalt thee for euer, ãd I doe deſpiſe, and ſubmit my ſelfe to thee, euen to the depth of my vnworthineſſe.

3. Behold thou art the Holy

of Holies, and I the skum of ſinners! behold thou boweſt thy ſelfe downe to me, who am not worthy ſo much as to looke vp to thee! Behold thou commeſt to me, it is thy will to be with me, thou inuiteſt me to thy banquet. Thou wilt giue me the food of heauen, & bread of Angels to eate, which truly is no other then thy ſelfe, the liuely bread, that deſcendeſt from heauen, and giueſt life to the world.

4. Behold from whence this loue proceedes! what kinde of fauour and benignity is this which shines vpon vs! What thankes and praiſes are due to thee for theſe benefits! O how good & profitable was thy counſel when thou ordainedſt it! How ſweet and pleaſant the banquet, when thou gaueſt thy ſelfe to be our food! How

wonderfull thy worke, ô Lord, how powerful thy vertue, how vnſpeakable thy truth! For thou ſaidſt the word, and all thinges were made; and this was done which thou commandeſt.

5. A thinge of great admiration, and worthy of faith, and ſurpaſſing the vnderſtanding of man; that thou, my Lord God, true God and Man, shouldeſt be wholy conteyned vnder a ſmall forme of bread and wine, and shouldeſt be eaten by the receauer without being conſumed. Thou who art the Lord of all thinges, and ſtandeſt in neede of none, haſt pleaſed to dwell in vs by meanes of this thy Sacrament: preſerue my hart and body vnſpotted, that with a cheerful and pure conſcience, I may often celebrate thy myſteries, &

receaue them to my euerlasting health, which thou hast chiefly ordained & constituted for thy honour, and perpetuall memory.

6. Reioyce my soule, and giue thāks to God for so noble a gift, and singular comfort left thee in this vale of teares. For as often as thou callest to mind this mystery, and receauest the body of Christ: so often dost thou worke the work of thy redemption, and art made partaker of al the merits of Christ. For the charity of Christ is neuer diminished, and the greatnesse of his mercy is neuer drayned. Therefore thou oughtest alwaies to dispose thy selfe herunto by a fresh renewing of thy mind, and to weigh with attentiue consideration this great mistery of thy saluation. So great,

& ioyfull it ought to ſeeme to thee, when thou ſayeſt, or heareſt Maſſe, as if the ſame day Chriſt firſt deſcending into the wombe of the Virgin, were become man, or hanging on the croſſe, did ſuffer and dy for the ſaluation of mankinde.

CHAPT. III.

That it is profitable to communicate often.

BEhold, O Lord, I come to thee, that I may be comforted in thy gift, and be delighted in thy holy banquet, which thou, O Lord, haſt prepared in thy ſweetneſſe, for the poore. Behold in thee is al whatſoeuer I can, or ought to deſire: thou art my health, and

my redemption, my hope, and my ſtrength, my honour, and my glory. Make ioyfull therefore this day, the ſoule of thy ſeruant, for that I haue lifted it vp to thee my ſweete Ieſus, I deſire to receaue thee now with deuotion, and reuerence; I doe long to bringe thee into my houſe, that with Zacchæus I may deſerue to be bleſſed by thee, and numbred amongſt the children of Abraham. My ſoule thirſtes to receaue thy body, my hart deſires to be vnited to thee.

2. Giue thy ſelfe to me, and it ſufficeth For beſides thee no comfott is auailable. I cannot be without thee, nor liue without thy viſitation. And therefore I muſt often come to thee, and receaue thee as the only remedie of my health, leaſt perhaps I faint in the way, if I be de-

be depriued of thy heauenly food. For ſo, moſt mercifull Ieſus, thou once didſt ſay, preaching to the people, and curing ſundry diſeaſes: I will not ſend them home faſtinge, leaſt they faint in the way. Deale thou therfore in like manner now with me, who haſt vouchſafed to leaue thy ſelfe in the Sacrament for the comfort of the faithfull. For thou art the ſweet refection of the ſoule and he that eates thee worthily, ſhall be partaker, and heire of euerlaſting glory. It is neceſſary for me, that doe ſo often fall & ſinne, ſo quickly wax dull and faint, that by often prayers and confeſſion, and receauing of thy ſacred body, I renew, cleāſe, & inflame my ſelfe, leaſt perhapps by long abſtayning I fall from my holy purpoſe.

3. For man is prone to euill

from his youth, and vnleſſe this diuine remedy helpe him, he quickly ſlides to worſe. This holy Communion therfore drawes backe from euill, and comfortes in good. For if I be now ſo often ſlacke, and negligent when I communicate, or ſay Maſſe, what would become of me, if I receaued not this remedie, & ſought not after ſo great a helpe? Though euery day I be not fit, nor well prepared to ſay Maſſe, I will endeauour notwithſtanding at conuenient times to receaue the diuine miſteries, and make my ſelfe partaker of ſo great a grace. For this is the only chief comforte of a faithfull ſoule, whilſt she wanderes from thee in this mortall body, that being mindfull of her God, she often receaue her Beloued with a deuout minde.

4. O wonderfull benignity of thy mercy towards vs, that thou, Lord God, the Creatour and giuer of life to all ſpirits, doſt vouchſafe to come to a poore ſoule, and with thy Godhead & Humanity to replenish her hunger. O happy mind and bleſſed ſoule, that deſerues to receaue, her Lord God, with deuout affection; and in receauing of thee to be filled with ſpirituall ioy! O how great a Lord doth she entertaine! HOW beloued a gueſt doth she harbour! how pleaſant a companion doth she receaue! how faithfull a friend doth she accept! how beautifull and noble a ſpouſe doth she imbrace! she imbraces him who is to be loued, aboue all things that may be deſired. Let heauen and earth and all their beauty, be ſilent in thy preſence.

For what beauty and praiſe ſoeuer they haue, it is receaued from thy bountie, and ſhall not equal the beautie of thy name, of whoſe wiſedome there is no end.

CHAPT. IV.

That many benefits are beſtowed vpon them that communicate deuoutly.

The voyce of the Diſciple.

MY Lord God, preuent thy ſeruant in the bleſſings of thy ſweetnes, that I may deſerue to approach worthily and deuoutly to thy holy Sacrament; ſtirre vp my hart vnto thee, and deliuer me from all heauines & ſlouth: viſit me

with thy comfort, that I may taſt in ſpirit thy ſweetneſſe, which plentifully lyes hid in this Sacrament, as a fountaine. Giue light alſo to my eyes, to behold ſo great a myſtery, & ſtrengthen me to beleeue it with vndoubted faith. For it is thy worke, and not mans power; thy ſacred inſtitution, not mans inuention. For noe man is of himſelfe able to couprehende and vnderſtand theſe thinges, which ſurpaſſe the vnderſtanding euen of Angels. What therfore ſhall I vnworthy ſinner, earth and ashes, be able to ſearch and comprehēd of ſo high and ſacred a myſtery.

2. O Lord in ſincerity of hart, with a good and firme faith, & at thy commandement, I come to thee with hope and reuerence, & doe verily beleeue, that

thou art heere preſent in the Sacrament, God and Man. Thy holy pleaſure is, that I receaue thee, and by charity doe vnite my ſelfe vnto thee. Wherfore I doe recurre to thy clemency, and doe craue ſpeciall grace, that I may wholy melt in thee and aboūd with loue, and hereafter neuer admit any externall comfort. For this moſt high & worthy Sacrament, is the health of the ſoule and body, the remedy of all ſpirituall ſicknes: by it my vices are cured, my paſſions bridled, temptations ouercome or weakened, greater grace infuſed, vertue begun increaſed, faith confirmed, hope ſtrengtened, and charity inflamed and enlarged.

3. For thou haſt beſtowed, & ſtill oftentimes doſt beſtow, many benefits in this Sacra-

ment vpon thy beloued that receaue deuoutly, my God the Protectour of my ſoule, the ſtrengthēner of humaine frailty, and the giuer of al inward comfort. Thou impartest to them much comfort againſt ſundry tribulations, and liftest them vp from the depth of their owne baſenes, to the hope of thy protection, and doſt inwardly refresh and illuſtrate them with a certaine new grace, in ſuch ſort, that they who before Communion felt themſelues heauy and indiſpoſed, afterwards being ſtrengthned with heauenly meate and drinke, doe finde in themſelues a great change to the better. Which thou doſt ſo diſpoſe to thy elect, that they may truly acknowledg & patiently proue, how great their owne infirmity is, and what

benefit and grace they receaue from thee. For they of themſelues are cold, dul and indeuout; but by thee they are made feruent, agile, and full of deuotion. For who is there, that approching humbly vnto the Fountaine of ſweetneeſſe, doth not carry away from thence at leaſt ſome little ſweetneſſe? Or who ſtanding by a great fire, receaue not ſome ſmall heate therby? Thou art à fountaine alwaies full & ouerflowing, a fire euer burning & neuer decaying.

4. Wherfore if I cannot draw at the full out of this fountaine, nor drinke my fill, I will notwithſtanding ſet my lips to the mouth of this heauenly conduit, that I may draw from thence, at leaſt ſome ſmall drop to refresh my thirſt, to the end I wither not wholy

away and perish. And though I be not altogether celeſtial, nor ſo inflamed as the Cherubins & Seraphins, notwithſtanding I will endeauour to apply my ſelfe to deuotion, and diſpoſe my harte to obtaine ſome ſmall ſparke of diuine fire, by humbly receauing of this life-giueing Sacramente. And whatſoeuer is herunto wanting in me, good Ieſu, moſt bleſſed Sauiour, doe thou ſupply for me, moſt benigne and gracious Lord, who haſt vouchſafed to call vs to thee, ſaying. Come vnto me al yee that labour & are burdened, & I wil refresh you.

5. I labour in the ſweate of my browes, I am vexed with griefe of hart, I am burdened with ſinnes, I am troubled with temptations, I am intangled and oppreſſed with ma-

ny euill passions, and there is none to help me, none to deliuer and saue me, but thou, Lord God, my Sauiour to whom I commit my selfe, & all mine, that thou maist keepe me, and bring me to life euerlasting. Receaue me to the honour and glory of thy name, who hast prepared thy Body and Bloud to be my meate and my drinke. Graunt, Lord God, my Sauiour that by frequenting thy mysteries, my zeale and deuotion may increase.

CHAPT. V.

Of the dignitie of this Sacrament, and Prieſtly function.

The voice of the Diſciple.

IF thou hadſt angelical puritie, and the ſanctity of S. Iohn Baptiſt, thou wert not worthie to receaue, nor handle this Sacrament. For it is not within the compaſſe of the deſerts of men that man should conſecrate and handle the Sacrament of Chriſt, and receaue the bread of Angels for foode. a great myſtery, and great is the dignity of Prieſts, to whom is graunted that which is not permitted to the Angels: For Prieſts only inſtituted in the

Church, haue power to celebrate, and consecrate the body of Christ. The Priest is the Minister of God, vsing the wordes of God, by Gods commandement; but God is there the principall actour, and inuisible worker, to whom is subiect all that he pleases: and all that he commandes doth obey.

2. Thou oughtest therefore to giue more credit to God Almighty in this most excellent Sacrament, then to thine owne sense, or to any visible signe. And therfore thou art to come vnto this Mystery with feare and reuerēce. Cōsider attētiuelie with thy selfe, what that is, wherof the Ministry is deliuered vnto thee by the impositiō of the Bishops hands. Behold thou art made a Priest, & consecrated to say Masse: looke now that in due time thou offer Sacrifice

to God faithfully & deuoutly, and carry thy ſelfe ſo, as thou maiſt be without reproofe. Thou haſt not lightned thy burthen, but art now bound with a ſtraiter band of diſcipline, and art obliged to a more perfect degree of ſanctity. A Prieſt ought to be adorned with all kind of vertue, and to giue example of good life to others. His conuerſation should not be according to the ordinary and common proceedings of men, but like to the Angels in heauen, or to perfect men on earth.

3. A Prieſt clothed in ſacred garments, is the Vicegerent of Chriſt, to pray humbly, & with proſtrate minde vnto God for himſelfe and the whole people. He hath the ſigne of the Croſſe of our Lord before and behind, to the end he may

euer remember the Paſſion of Chriſt : he beares the Croſſe before him in the Veſtement, that he may diligently beholde the footſteps of our ſauiour Chriſt, and feruently endeauour to follow them. He is behinde marked with the Croſſe, that he may patiently ſuffer for God, whatſoeuer aduerſitie shall be laid vpon him by others. He beares the croſſe before, that he may lamēt his owne ſinnes: and the ſame he hath alſo behind, that he may with a compaſſionate harte bewaile the offences of others, and know that he is placed as a mediatour betweene God, and the ſinner. Neither ought he to ceaſe from praier & holy oblation, till he deſerue to obtaine grace and mercy. When a Prieſt doth celebrate, he honoures God, reioyces the Angels, edifies the

Church, helpes the liuing, giues reſt to the dead, and makes himſelfe partaker of all good deeds.

CHAPT. VI.

An interrogation of the exerciſe before Communion.

The voyce of the Diſciple.

Whē I weigh thy worthynes, O Lord, and my vnworthineſſe, I tremble, and am confounded in my ſelfe. For if I come not vnto thee, I fly from life; and if I vnworthyly intrude my ſelfe, I incurre thy diſpleaſure. What therfore shal I doe my God, my helper, and my counſellour in neceſſity?

2. Teach me the right way, appoint me ſome brief exerciſe,

ſubtable to this holy myſtery of ſacred Communion. For it is good for me to know, how I should reuerently and deuoutly prepare my hart to thee for the profitable receauing of thy Sacrament, or for the celebrating of ſo great & diuine a Sacrifice.

CHAPT. VII.

Of the diſcuſsing of our owne conſcience, with purpoſe of amendment.

The voyce of the Beloued

ABoue all things, the Prieſt of God ought to come to celebrate, handle, & receaue this Sacranent, with great humility of harte, and lowly reuerence, with a full faith, and a Godly

a Godly desire of the honour of the diuine Maiesty. Examine diligently thy conscience, and to thy power, purge and cleanse it with true contrition, and humble confession: so as there may be nothing in thee, that may be burdensome vnto thee, or that may breed in thee remorse of conscience, & hinder thy free accesse to these heauenly mysteries. Repent thee of all thy sinnes in generalla; nd in particuler bewaile thy daily offences. And if thou hast time, confesse to God in the secret of thy harte, all the myseries of thy disordered passions.

2. Lament and greeue, that thou art yet so subiect to sensuality, & so addicted to the world; so vnmortified in thy passions; so ful of the motions of concupiscence; so vnwatchful ouer thy outward senses, so

often intangled with many vaine fantaſies; ſo vehemently inclined to outward things; ſo negligent in the interiour; ſo prone to laughter and immodeſty; ſo hard to teares & cõpunction; ſo prompt to eaſe & pleaſures of the flesh; ſo dull to auſterity & feruour; ſo curious to heare newes & ſee vaine ſights; ſo ſlack to imbrace that which tends to thine owne humiliation and contempt; ſo couetous of aboundance; ſo niggardly in giuing; ſo faſt in keeping; ſo inconſiderat in ſpeech; ſo vnbridled to ſilence; ſo looſe in manners; ſo outragious in deedes: ſo greedy at meate; ſo deafe to the word of God; ſo haſty to reſt; ſo ſlow to labour; ſo watchfull to tales; ſo drowſy to watch in the ſeruice of God; ſo haſty to the end thereof; ſo inconſtant in

attention ; ſo neglectfull in ſaying thy office ; ſo vndeuout in ſayinge Maſſe ; ſo dry in receauing ; ſo quickly diſtracted; ſo ſeldome wholy recollected ; ſo ſuddainly moued to anger ; ſo apt to take diſpleaſure againſt another; I ſo prone to iudge ; ſo ſeuere to reprehend ; ſo ioyfull in proſperity ; ſo weake in aduerſitie ; ſo often purpoſing much good, and performing little.

3. Theſe and other thy defects being confeſſed, and bewailed with ſorrow, & great diſlike of thine owne infirmitie, make a firme purpoſe alwaies to amend thy ſelfe, and to goe forwardes in vertue. Then with full reſignation, and with thy whole will, offer thy ſelfe vp a perpetuall ſacrifice on the altar of thy hart, to the honour of my name

faithfully committing thy body and and ſoule vnto me, that thou maiſt ſo alſo deſerue to come worthily to offer ſacrifice vnto God, and to receaue profitably the Sacrament of my body.

4. For there is no oblation more worthy, nor ſatisfaction greater, for the washing away of ſinnes, then to offer vp our ſelues vnto God purely & wholy with the oblation of the Body of Chriſt in the maſſe, and in Communion. If a man doe what lies in him, and be truly penitent, whenſoeuer he comes to me for pardon and grace, I liue, ſaith our Lord, (who will not the death of a ſinner, but rather that he be conuerted and liue) I will not remember his ſins any more, but they shal be all forgiuen him, and fully pardonned.

CHAPT. VIII.

Of the oblation of Christ on the Crosse, and resignation of our selues.

The voyce of the beloued.

AS I willingly offered vp my selfe to God my Father, with my hands stretched forth on the Crosse, and my body naked for thy sinnes, so that nothing remained in me that was not turned into a sacrifice, for the appeasing of the diuine wrath, so oughtest thou also to offer vp thy selfe willingly to me daily in the Masse, as a pure and holy oblation, with thy whole force, & desir, in as harty a manner as thou canst. What doe I require of thee

more, then that thou resigne thy selfe wholy to me? Whatsoeuer thou giuest besides thy selfe, is of little accompt in my sight, for I seek not thy gift, but thee.

2. As it would not suffice thee to haue all things whatsoeuer besides me; so nether can it please me whatsoeuer thou giuest, if thou offerest not vp thy selfe. Offer thy selfe vnto me, & giue thy selfe, & al that thou art, for God, and thy offering shall be gratefull. Behold I offered vp my selfe wholy to my Father for thee, & gaue my whole body, and bloud, for thy food, that I might be wholy thine, & thou remaine mine. But if thou abidest in thy selfe, and dost not offer thy selfe vp freely to my wil, thy oblation is not entire, neither shall the vnion betweene vs be

perfect. Therfore a free offering vp thy ſelfe into the hãdes of God, ought to goe before all thy actions, if thou wilt obtaine freedome and grace. Therfore ſo few become inwardly illuminated, and enioy true liberty of harte, for that they doe not reſolue wholy to deny themſelues. My ſaying is vndonbtedly true. Vnleſſe one forſake all, he cannot be my diſciple. If thou therfore wish to be mine, offer vp thy ſelfe vnto me with thy whole deſires.

CHAPT. IX.

That we ought to offer vp our ſelues and all that is ours vnto God, and to pray for all.

The voyce of the Diſciple.

THine, O Lord, are all thinges that are in heauen and in earth. I deſire to offer vp my ſelfe to thee, as a free obligation, and to remaine awaies thine. O Lord, in ſincerity of my hart, I offer my ſelf to thee this day, in ſacrifice of perpetuall praiſe, to be thy ſeruant for euer. Receaue me with this holy oblation of thy precious body, which, in the preſence of the Angells inuiſibly attending here vpon thee,

I offer to thee, that it may be to the health of my ſoule, and the ſaluation of all thy people.

2. I offer to thee, O Lord, all my ſinnes & offences, which I haue committed, in the ſight of thee, and thy holy Angels from the day wherin I firſt could ſinne, to this houre, vpon thy holy altar: that thou maiſt conſume and burne them all with the fire of thy charity, and waſh out all the ſtaines of my ſinnes, and cleanſe my conſcience from all offence, and reſtore to me againe thy grace, which I loſt by ſinne, forgiuing me al my offences, and receauing me mercifully in the kiſſe of peace.

3. What can I doe for my ſinnes, but humbly confeſſe and bewaile them, and intreat alwaies for mercy without intermiſſion? I beſeech thee,

heare me in thy aboundant mercy, when I ſtand before thee my God. All my ſinnes are very displeasing to me. I will neuer commit them any more, but I am ſory and will be ſory for them as long as I liue, and am ready to doe pennance, & to ſatisfy for them to the vttermoſt of my power. Forgiue me, ô God, forgiue me my ſinnes, for thy holy names ſake, ſaue my ſoule, which thou haſt redeemed with thy precious Bloud. Behold I commit my ſelfe vnto thy mercy, I reſigne my ſelfe ouer into thy hands. Doe with me according to thy goodneſſe, not according to my wickednes, & manifold iniquity.

4. I offer vp alſo vnto thee all whatſoeuer is good in me, although it be very little and imperfect, that thou maiſt

amend and ſanctify it, that thou maiſt make it grateful and acceptable to thee, and alwaies perfect more and more that which thou haſt begun, and bring me alſo, who am thy ſlouthful and vnprofitable creature, to a good & bleſſed end.

5. I offer vp alſo to thee all the Godly deſires of deuout perſons, the neceſſities of my parents & friends, my brethen & ſiſters, & of al thoſe that are deare vnto me, & that haue done good either to my ſelfe or others for thy loue, & that haue deſired me to ſay Maſſe & pray for them & all others, whether they be yet aliue, or already dead: that they al may receaue the help of thy grace & comfort, protection from dangers, deliuery from paine, & being freed from al euils, may ioyfully giue worthy thankes to thee.

6. I offer vp, alſo vnto thee my prayers, and ſacrifices, eſpeciallie for them who haue in any thing wronged, grieued, or ſlaundred me, or haue done me any domage or diſpleaſure; and for thoſe alſo, whom I haue at any time grieued, troubled, and ſcandalized by words, or deeds, wittingly, or at vnawares: that it may pleaſe thee to forgiue vs all our ſinnes and offences, one againſt the other. Take, O Lord, from our harts all iealouſy, all indignation, wrath, and contention, and whatſoeuer may hurt Charity, and weaken brotherly loue. Haue mercy, O Lord, haue mercy on thoſe, that craue thy mercy: giue grace to them that ſtand in need thereof, and graunt that we may be worthy to enioy thy grace, and attaine to life euerlaſting. Amen.

CHAPT. X.

That the holy Communion is not lightly to be forborne.

The voyce of the Beloued.

THou oughteſt often to haue recourſe to the Fountaine of grace, and of diuine mercie. to the Fountaine of goodneſſe, and of all piety, that thou maiſt be cured of thy ſinnes and paſſions, and deſerue to be made more ſtrong and vigilant againſt all temptations and deceipts of the Diuell: The enemy knowing the greateſt profit, and remedy to conſiſt in the holy Communion, endeauoures by all meanes and occaſions to withdraw and

hinder faithfull and deuout perſons from it.

2. Some when they purpoſe to receaue the ſacred communion ſuffer greateſt aſſaults of the Diuell. For that wicked ſpirit (as is written in Iob) comes amongſt the ſonnes of God, to trouble them with his accuſtomed malice & impiety, or to make them ouer fearfull & perplexed, that ſo he may diminish their affection, or by ſubtile aſſaultes, take away their faith; to the end they may either altogether abſtaine from this diuine food, or at leaſt come to it with leſſe deuotion. But there is no heed to be taken of his fraudes & malicious ſuggeſtions, be they neuer ſo filthy & hideous, but all is to be turned back vpon his owne head. We ought to contemne and ſcorne him miſe-

rable wretch, & not to omit the ſacred communion for his aſſaults, and the troubles which he raiſes.

3. Oftentimes alſo an exceſſiue care for the obtaining of deuotion, & a certaine anxiety for the making of our Confeſſion hindres vs. Follow in theſe occaſions the counſell of the wiſe, and put away all anxiety & ſcrupule, for it hindres the grace of God, & ouerthrowes deuotion. Omit not for euery ſmall vexation of the mind which happenes, to receaue this holy Sacrament, but go preſently to confeſſion, and willingly forgiue others, whatſoeuer offences they haue done againſt thee: and if thou haſt offended any, humbly craue pardon, and God wil willingly forgiue thee.

4. What auailes it to delay

cõfeſſion, and to deferre receauing? Purge thy ſelfe with ſpeed, ſpit out the venome preſently, make haſt to take a remedy, and thou ſhalt find it better, then if thou deferredſt it long. If thou omitteſt it to day for this cauſe, perhaps to morrow ſome greater will fall out, & ſo thou maiſt be hindered a long time from theſe diuine myſteries, and become more vnfit. Stirre vp thy ſelfe, and ſhake off all heauineſſe and ſlouth, with the greatneſt force and ſpeed thou canſt. For it profites nothing to continue long in diſquietnes and trouble of mind, and for daily occurring impediments, to withdraw thy ſelfe from the Sacraments. Yea it hurtes very much to defer Communion long, for it is wont to breed a great and dangerous dulneſſe. Alas, ſome cold

cold and dissolute people, do willingly delay their confessiō, & doe therfore defer the sacred Communion, least they should be bound to greater watch ouer themselues.

5. O how little charity and weake deuotion haue they that so easily omit the receauing of these holy mysteries! how happie is he and gratefull to God, who his life, & keepes his conscience in such puritie, that he may be ready and fit to communicate euery day, if it were conuenient and might be done without notice! If any sometimes abstaine out of humility, or by reasō of some lawful impediment, he is to be commended for the reuerence which therin he shewes. But if it proceedes of coldnesse, he must stir himself vp, and doe what lies in him, & God will

proſper his deſire, for the good will he hath to doe it, which God doth chiefly reſpect.

6. And when any lawfull hindrance doth happē, he muſt alwaies haue yet a good will and louinge deſire to communicate, and ſo ſhall he not looſe the fruit of the Sacrament. For a deuout perſon may euery day and houre profitably and without lett, receaue Chriſt ſpiritually: and yet on certaine daies, & at times appointed he ought to receaue the body of his Redeemour Sacramentally, with a reuerent deſire, and rather ſeek the honour and glory of God, then his owne comfort. For he communicates myſtically, and is inuiſibly fed, as often as he deuoutly calles to mind the myſtery of the Incarnation, & the Paſſion of Chriſt, & is inflamed with his loue.

7. He that prepares not himſelfe, but when feaſtes drawe neere, and when cuſtome compelles him therunto, shall often be vnprepared. Bleſſed is he that offerres himſelfe vp as an Holocauſt and burnt offering to our Lord, as often as he doth celebrare or communicate. Be not too long nor too short, in ſaying Maſſe, but keep the acuſtomed manner of thoſe with whom thou liueſt. Thou oughteſt not to be tedious & troubleſome to others, but to obſerue the common courſe, according to the appointment of thy Superiours: and rather frame thy ſelfe to the profit of others, then to thine owne deuotion or deſire.

CHAPT. XI.

That the Body of Christ, and the holy Scripture, are most necessarie to a faithfull soule.

The voyce of the Disciple.

O Most sweet Lord Iesu, how great is the delight of a deuout soule that feastes with thee in thy bāquet, where there is no other meate offered to be eaten, but thy selfe her only beloued, and most to be desired aboue all the desires of her hart. And verily it would be a great comfort to me, to powre out teares from the bottome of my hart in thy presence, & with deuout Magdalen to wash thy feet with the

teares of mine eyes. But wher is this deuotion? Where is so plentifull shedding of holy teares? Surely in the sight of thee and thy holy Angels, my whole hart should be inflamed and dissolue into teares for ioy. For I enioy thee in the Sacrament reallie present, although hidden vnder another forme.

2. For to behold thee in thine owne diuine brightnesse, mine eyes would not be able to to endure it, nether could the whole world stand in the clearnesse of the glory of thy Maiesty. Thou therfore prouidest for my weakenesse, in that thou couerest thy selfe vnder the Sacrament. I doe really enioy and adore him, whom the Angels adore in heauen, but I, as yet for the time, in faith: they in his proper forme, and without shaddowe. I ought to be con-

tented with the light of true faith, & to walke therin, vntill the day of euerlasting brightneſſe breake forth, and the shaddowes of figures paſſe away. But whē that shall come which is perfect, the vſe of Sacraments shal ceaſe. For the bleſſed in heauenly glory, need not the remedy of Sacraments, who reioyce without end in the preſence of God, beholding his glory face to face, and being transformed by his brightneſſe into the brightneſſe of the incomprehenſible Deity, they taſt the word of God made flesh, as he was from the beginning, & as he remaines for euer.

3. Whilſt I remember theſe thy wonderfull workes, all ſpirituall comfort whatſoeuer becomes very tedious vnto me: for that as long as I behold not

my Lord openly in his glory, I make no accompt of whatſoeuer I ſee or heare in this life. Thou art my witnes, O God, that nothing can comfort me, no creature giue me reſt, but thou my God, whom I deſire to behold euerlaſtingly. But this is not poſſible, whilſt I remaine in this mortall life. Therfore I muſt frame my ſelfe to much patience, & ſubmit my ſelfe to thee in all my deſires. For thy Saints alſo, O Lord, who now reioyce with thee in the Kingdome of heauen, whileſt they liued, expected the coming of thy glorie, in faith and great patience. What they beleeued, I beleeue; what they hoped for, I expect; whither they are come, I truſt I ſhall come by thy grace. In the meane time I will be forward in faith, ſtrengthened by the

examples of the Saints. I haue alſo deuout bookes for my cõfort, & fot the guide of my life; & aboue all theſe, thy moſt holy Body for a ſingular remedy and refuge.

4. For I perceaue two things to be chiefly neceſſary for me in this miſerable life; without which it would be inſupportable to me. Whilſt I am kept in the priſon of this body, I acknowledge my ſelfe to ſtand in need of two things, to wit, food and light. Thou haſt therfore giuen to me (weake creature) thy ſacred Body for the refection of my ſoule and body, & haſt ſet thy word as a light to my feet; without theſe two I could not well liue. For the word of God, is the light of the ſoule; and thy Sacrament, the bread of life. Theſe alſo may be called, the two tables ſet on the one

ſide & the other, in the ſtore-houſe of the holy Church. One is the table of the holy Altar, conteyning the ſacred bread, that is, the precious body of Chriſt: the other is of the diuine law, conteyning holy doctrin, teaching true faith, & certainely leading to the part of the Tẽple within the veyle, where are the Holy of Holies. Thanks be vnto thee, Lord Ieſus, light of euerlaſting light, for thy table of holy doctrine, at which thou ſerueſt vs by thy ſeruants the Prophets and Apoſtles, and other Doctours.

5. Thanks be to thee Creatour and Redeemer of man, who to manifeſt thy charity to the whole world haſt prepared a greate ſupper, wherin thou haſt offered to be eaten, not the myſtical lambe, but thine owne moſt ſacred Body and

Bloud, reioycing all the faithfull with thy holy banquet, and replenishing them to the full with thy heauenly Cuppe, in which are all the delights of heauen, and the holy Angels doe feaſt with vs, but with a more happy ſweetneſſe.

6. O how great and honourable is the office of Prieſts, to whom it is graunted with ſacred words to cõſecrat the Lord of Maieſty, with their lips to bleſſe him, with their hands to hold him, with their owne mouth to receaue him, and to adminiſter him to others! O how cleane ought thoſe hands to be! How pure that mouth! How holy the body! How vnſpotted the hart of the Prieſts, in whom the Authour of purity ſo often entres! Nothing but holy, no word but chaſt and profitable, ought to pro-

ceed from the mouth of the Prieſt, which ſo often receaues the Sacrament of Chriſt.

7. Simple and chaſt ought to be the eyes, that are wont to behold the body of Chriſt, the hands pure and lifted vp to heauen, that vſe to handle the Creatour of heauen and earth. To the Prieſts eſpecially it is ſaid in the Law: Be yee holy, for that I your Lord God am holy.

8. Aſſiſt vs (Almighty God) with thy grace, that we, who haue vndertaken the office of Prieſthood, may ſerue thee worthily and deuoutly in all purity, and with a ſincere conſcience. And if we cannnot liue in ſo great innocency as we ought to doe, graunt vs notwithſtanding, in due manner to bewaile the ſinnes which we haue committed, and in

the ſpirit of humility, and ſincere intention, ro ſerue thee herafter with more feruour.

CHAPT. XII.

That he that is to communicate ought to prepare himſelfe with great diligence.

The voyce of the Beloued.

I Am the louer of purity, and the giuer of al ſanctity, I ſeek a pure hart, and there is the place of my reſt. Make ready and adorne for me a great chamber and I wil make with thee the Paſcha with my Diſciples. If thou wilt haue me come vnto thee, and remaine with thee, purge the old leauen, and make cleane the dwelling of thy hart: shut out

the whole world, and all tumult of vices: sit like a sparrow solitary vpon the house top, and thinke of thy offences in the bitternesse of thy soule. For euery louer, prepares the best and faireſt roome for his beloued, and herein is knowne the affection of him that intertaines his beloued.

2. know thou notwithstanding, that the worth of no action of thine, is able to make this preparation sufficient, although thou shouldest prepare thy selfe a whole yeare together, and thinke on nothing else, but of my mercy and Grace only: thou art suffered to come to my table like a beggar inuited to dinner to a rich man, who hath nothing else to returne him for his benefits, but to humble himselfe, & giue him thanks. Doe what lies in

thee and do it diligẽtly, not for neceſſitie, but with feare and reuerence, & harty affection receaue the body of thy beloued Lord God, who vouchſafes to come vnto thee. I am he that haue called thee, I haue commanded it to be done, I will ſupply what is wanting in thee, come and receaue me.

3. When I beſtow the grace of deuotion on thee, giue thankes to God, for it giuen thee, not for that thou deſerueſt it, but becauſe I haue mercy on thee. If thou haue it not, but rather feele thy ſelfe dry, continue in prayer, ſigh and knock, and giue not ouer vntil thou deſerue to receaue ſome crumme or drop of grace. Thou haſt need of me, not I of thee, nether comeſt thou to ſanctify me, but I come to ſanctify and make thee better. Thou co-

meſt that thou maiſt be ſanctified by me, and vnited to me, that thou maiſt receaue new grace, and be ſtirred vp againe to amendment. Neglect not this grace, but prepare thy hart with all diligence, and receaue thy beloued into thy ſoule.

4. But thou oughteſt not only to prepare thy ſelfe to deuotion before Communion, but carefully alſo to conſerue thy ſelfe therin, after thou haſt receaued the Sacrament. Nether is the carefull guard of thy ſelfe, leſſe exacted after, then deuout preparation before. For a good guard afterwards, is the beſt preparation thou canſt make for the obtaining againe of greater grace, becauſe that mans mind becomes very indiſpoſed, if he preſently powre himſelfe out to outward com-

forts. Beware of much talke, remaine in ſome ſecret place, and enioy thy God. For thou haſt him, whom all the world cannot take from thee. I am he, to whom thou oughteſt wholy to giue thy ſelfe, that ſo thou maiſt liue herafter, not in thy ſelfe, but in me, without all care.

CHAP. XIII.

That a deuout ſoule ought to deſire with her whole hart, to be united to Chriſt in the B. Sacrament.

The voice of the Diſciple.

HOw may I obtaine this, ô Lord, that I may find thee alone, and open my whole hart to thee, and enioy thee as my

my ſoule deſires? And that no man may look vpon me, nor any creature moue me or reſpect me, but thou alone maiſt ſpeake vnto me, and I to thee, as the beloued, is wont to ſpeak to his beloued, and a friend to banquet with his friend? This I pray for, this I deſire, that I may be wholy vnited to thee, and may withdraw my hart from all created things, and more and more, by ſacred Cõmunion and often celebrating, learne to taſt of heauenly & euerlaſting ſweetnes. O Lord God, when shal I be wholy vnited and abſorpt by thee, and altogether forgetfull of my ſelfe! thou in me, and I in thee, and ſo graunt vs both to continue in one.

2. Thou art my beloued, the choiceſt amongſt thouſands, in whom my ſoule hath taken

pleaſure to dwel all the dayes of her life. Thou art my peace-maker in whom is greateſt peace, and true reſt, without whom is labour and ſorrow, and infinite miſery. Thou art a hidden God, and thy counſell is not with the wicked, but thy ſpeach is with the humble and ſimple of hart. O Lord, how ſweet is thy ſpirit, who, to the end thou mighteſt shew thy ſweetnes towards thy children vouchſafeſt to feed them with the moſt delightſome bread which deſcendes from heauen, and is full of all ſweetnes. Surely there is no other Nation ſo great, that hath Gods approaching vnto them, as thou our God art preſent to all thy faithfull, vnto whom for their daily comfort, and for the lifting vp of their harts to heauen, thou giueſt thy ſelfe to be eaten and enioyed.

3. For what other nation is there ſo famous, as the Chriſtian people? or what creature vnder heauen ſo beloued, as a deuout ſoule, to whom God himſelfe commes to feed her with his glorious flesh? O vnſpeakable grace! O admirable fauour! O infinite loue ſingularly beſtowed vpon man! But what shall I giue vnto our Lord in returne of his grace, for ſo ſingular a charity. There is no other thing more gratefull that I am able to giue, thē to beſtow my hart wholy on my God, and to vnite it perfectly vnto him. Then shall all my bowells reioyce, when my ſoule shall be perfectly vnited to God. Then he wil ſay to me: if thou wilt be with me, I will be with thee. And I wil anſweare him. Vouchſafe, O Lord, to remaine with me, and

I wil be with thee. This is my whole desire, that my hart be vnited to thee.

CHAPT. XIV.

Of the feruent desire of some deuout persons, to receaue the Body of Christ.

The voyce of the Disciple.

O How great is the store of thy sweetnesse, O Lord, which thou hast hidden for thē that feare thee! When I remember some deuout persons who come to thy Sacrament, O Lord, with great deuotion and affection, I am oftentimes cō-founded, and blush within my selfe, that I come so negligently and coldly to thy Altar, to thy table of holy communion:

that I remaine ſo dry, ād without ſpirituall motiō or feeling, that I am not wholy inflamed in thy preſence, my God, nor ſo earneſtly drawne and moued, as many deuout perſons haue bene, who out of a vehement deſire of receauing, and feeling affection of hart, could not containe themſelues from weeping, but with the deſire both of ſoule & body, they earneſtly longed after thee, O God, the liuely fountaine, being not otherwiſe able to temper nor ſatisfy their hunger, but by receauing thy body with all ioy and ſpirituall greedineſſe.

2. O moſt ardent faith of thoſe perſons, a probable argument of thy ſacred preſence. For theſe truly know their Lord in the breakingof bread, whoſe hart burnes ſo within them, whiſt thou, O bleſſed Ieſu, wal-

keſt with them. Such deſire and deuotion, ſo vehement loue and feruency, is oftentimes far off from me. Be mercifull to me good Ieſu, ſweet & benigne Lord, and graunt me thy poore needy creature, to feele ſometimes at leaſt in this holy Sacrament, a little cordiall deſire of thy loue, that my faith may be more ſtrengthned, my hope in thy goodneſſe increaſed, and that my charity once perfectly inflamed, after the taſting of heauenly Manna, may neuer decay,

3. Thy mercy, O Lord, is able to giue me the grace I deſire, & to viſitt me in thy bounteous clemency with the ſpirit of feruour, when it ſhall pleaſe thee. For although I burne not with ſo great deſirs as thoſe that are ſo eſpecially deuoted to thee: yet notwithſtanding by thy

grace I desire to haue this great inflamed desire, praying and crauing that I may partic pate with all such thy feruent louers, and be numbred among them in their holy company.

CHAPT. XV.

That the grace of deuotion is obtayned by humility and denial of our selues.

The voyce of the Beloued

THou oughtest to seeke the grace of deuotion instantly, to aske it earnestly, to expect it patiently and confidently, to receaue it ioyfully, to keepe it humbly, to walke with it diligently, and to commit the time and manner of this heauenly visitation to God, vn-

till it shall be his pleasure to come. Thou oughtest chiefly to humble thy selfe, when thou feelest inwardly little or no deuotion, and yet not to be too much deiected, nor to grieue inordinately for it. God often giues in a short moment, that which he hath long time denied: he giues sometime in the end, what in the beginning of prayer he differred to graunt.

2. If grace should be alwaies presently giuen, and at hand euer with a wish, it could not be wel indured by a weake man. Therfore deuotion is to be expected with good hope, & humble patience: yet impute it to thy selfe, and thy sinnes, when it is not giuen thee, or when it is secretly taken from thee. It is sometimes a smal matter that hindres and hides grace from vs, if it be to be

called ſmall, and not rather a great matter, that hinderes ſo great a good. And if thou remoue this, be it great or ſmall, and perfectly ouercome it, thou shalt haue thy deſire.

3. For preſently as ſoone as thou giueſt thy ſelfe to God, and ſeekeſt not this, nor that, for thine owne pleaſure or will; but ſetleſt thy ſelfe wholy in me, thou shalt find thy ſelfe vnited vnto him, & quiet. For nothing will taſt ſo well, and pleaſe thee ſo much, as the wil and pleaſure of God. Whoſoeuer therfore with a ſincere hart directes his intention to God, and purges himſelfe from all inordinat loue, or diſlike of any creature, shal be moſt fit to receaue grace, and worthy of the gift of deuotion. For our Lord beſtowes his bleſſings there, where he findes his veſ-

ſels empty. And how much the more perfectly one forſakes theſe baſeſt things, & dies to himſelfe by contempt of himſelfe: ſo much the more ſpeedily grace commes, and entres in more plentifully, & liftes vp the hart that is free, to a higher ſtate of grace.

4. Then ſhall he ſee, and abound, and wonder, and his hart ſhall be enlarged, becauſe the hand of our Lord is with him, and he hath put himſelfe wholy into his hand for euer. Behold ſo ſhall the man be bleſſed, that ſeekes Almighty God with his whole hart, and takes not his ſoule in vaine. This man deſerues great grace of diuine vnion, in receauing the holy Euchariſt, for that he regardes not his owne deuotion and comfort, but aboue all deuotion and comfort, he

prizes the honour & glory of God.

CHAPT. XXVI.

That we ought to manifeſt our neceſsitie to Chriſt, and to craue his grace.

The voyce of the Diſciple.

O Moſt ſweet and louing Lord, whom I now deſire to receaue deuoutly, thou knoweſt my infirmity, and the neceſſity which I endure, with how many ſinnes I am oppreſſed, how often I am grieued, tempted, troubled & defiled I come to thee for remedy, I craue of thee thy heauenly comfort, and the eaſe of my paine. I ſpeake to him that knowes all thinges, to whom

all my ſecrets are open, and who can only perfectly cõfort and help me. Thou knoweſt what it is, wherof aboue all things I ſtand in moſt neede, & how poore I am in vertues.

2. Behold I ſtand before thee, poore and naked, calling for grace, and crauing mercy. Refreſh this thy hungry and needy creature, giue heate to my coldneſſe, with the fire of thy loue: giue light to my blindnes, with the brightneſſe of thy preſence. Turne al earthly things to me, into bitterneſſe; all things grieuous and contrary, into patience, all baſe and creared things, into contempt and obliuion. Lift vp my hart to thee in heauen, and ſuffer me not to wander vpon earth. Be thou only ſweet ād delightſome to me from henceforth for ouermore, for thou only art

my meate, & my drinke, my loue & my ioy, my delight & all my good.

3. O that with thy presence thou wouldest wholy inflame, burne, and change me into thee, that I might be made one spirit with thee, by the grace of inward vnion and melting burning loue! Suffer me not to goe from thee hungry and dry, but deale mercifully with me, as thou hast oftentimes dealt wonderfully with thy Saints. What meruaile if I should be wholy inflamed by thee, and dy in my selfe, sith thou art fire burning and neuer decaying, loue purifying the hart, and inlightening the vnderstanding.

CHAPT. XVII.

Of burning loue, and vehement deſire to receaue Chriſt.

The voyce of the Diſciple.

With great deuotion & burning loue, with moſt harty affection and feruour I deſire to receaue thee, O Lord, as many Saints and deuout perſons haue deſired thee, when they receaued thy Sacrament, who were moſt pleaſing to thee in holineſſe of life, and moſt feruent in deuotion O my God, my euerlaſting loue, my whole good, my happineſſe without end, I would gladly receaue with the moſt vehement deſire, & worthy reuerence, that any

of the Saints euer had, or could feele.

2. And although I be vnworthy to haue all thoſe feelings of deuotion, yet I offer vnto thee the whole affection of my hart. As if I alon had thoſe moſt ſweet inflamed deſires: yea whatſoeuer alſo a deuout mind can conceaue and deſire, all that, with greateſt reuerēce, and moſt inward affection I offer & preſent vnto thee, I wish to deſire nothing to my ſelfe, but freely and moſt willingly to ſacrifice my ſelfe and all I haue vnto thee, my Lord God, my Creatour, and my Redeemer. I deſire to receaue thee this day with ſuch affection, reuerence, praiſe and honour; with ſuch gratitude, worthines, and loue; with ſuch faith, hope, and purity, as thy moſt bleſſed Mother the

glorious Virgin Marie receaued; and desired thee. When she humbly and deuoutly answered the Angel, who declared vnto her the mystery of thy Incarnation, and sayed: Behold the hand-maid of our Lord, let it be done to me according to thy word.

3. And as thy blessed Forerunner, the most excellent amongst the Saints Iohn Baptist, cherfully leaped with ioy of the holy Ghost, whilst he was yet shut vp in his mothers wombe: & afterwards seeing Iesus walking amongst men, humbling himselfe very much, said with deuout affection: The friend of the Bridegrom that standes & heares him, reioyces with ioy for the voyce of the Bridegrome: so I also wish to be inflamed with great and holy desires, and to offer my

selfe

selfe vp to thee with my whole hart. Wherfore I offer also, and present to thee the ioyes, feruent desiree, excesses of mind, spirituall illuminations, & heauenly visions of all deuout harts, with all the vertues and praises exercised, and to be exercised, by all creatures in heauen and earth, for my selfe, and all such as are commended to me in prayer, that by all thou maist be worthily praised, & glorified for euer.

4. Receaue my Lord God, the affections of my hart, and the desires of infinite praise and thankes, which according to the measure of thy vnspeakable greatnesse, are due to thee. These I yeeld thee, and desire to yeeld thee euery day and moment: and I doe intreat, and inuite all the heauenly spirits,

& all thy deuout ſeruants, to giue thanks and praiſes together with me.

5. Let all People, Tribes, and Tongues praiſe thee, & magnify thy holy and ſweet name with great ioy, and feruent deuotion; and let all that reuerently and deuoutly celebrate thy moſt high Sacrament, & receaue it with full faith, deſerue to find grace and mercy at thy hand, and pray humbly for me a ſinfull creature. And when they ſhall haue obtained their deſired deuotion and ioyfull vnion, & depart from thy ſacred heauēlie table, well comforted and meruailouſly refreshed, let thē vouchſafe to remember my poore and needy ſoule.

CHAPT. XVIII.

That man be not a curious searcher of this Sacrament, but an humble follower of Christ submitting his sense to faith.

The voyce of the Disciple.

THou oughtest to beware of curious and vnprofitable searching into this most profond Sacrement, if thou wilt not sink into the depth of doubt. He that is a searcher of Maiesty, shalbe appressed by glory. God is able to work more then man can vnderstād. A pious and humble inquiry of truth is tolerable, so he be alwaies ready to be taught, and

doe endeauour to walke in the ſound pathes of the ancient Fathers doctrine.

2. Bleſſed is that ſimplicity that forſakes the difficulte waies of queſtions, and goes on in the plaine and aſſured path of Gods Commandements. Many haue loſt deuotion, whilſt they would ſearch after high things. Faith and ſincere life are exacted at thy hands, not height of vnderſtanding, nor the depth of the myſteries of God. If thou doſt not vnderſtand, nor conceaue thoſe things that are vnder thee, how wilt thou be able to comprehend thoſe that are aboue thee? Submit thy ſelfe to God, & let thy ſenſe be ſubiect to faith, & the light of knowledge ſhall be giuen thee in that degree as ſhall be profitable & neceſſary for thee.

3. Some are grieuously tempted about faith & the Sacrament, but this is not to be imputed to them, but rather to the enemy. Do not regarde nor dispute with thy thoughts, nether doe thou giue answere to the doubts moued by the enemy; but beleeue the words of God, beleue his saints & Prophetes, & the wicked Serpent wil fly from thee. It is oftentimes very profitable to the seruant of God to suffer such things For he tempres not Infidels & sinners, whom he already securely possesses, but he sundry waies temptes & vexes the faithful & deuout.

4. Goe forward therfore with a sincere & vndoubted faith, and come to the Sacrament with vnfaigned reuerence. And whatsoeuer thou

art not able to vnderſtand, commit ſecurely to Almighty God, God deceaues thee not: he is deceaued that truſtes too much to himſelfe. God walkes with the ſimple, reueales himſelfe to the humble, giues vnderſtanding to little ones, openes the ſenſes of pure minds, & hides grace from the curious and proud. Humane reaſon is weake, & may be deceaued, but true faith cannot be deceaued.

5. Al reaſon and natural ſearch ought to follow faith, not to goe before it, nor impugne it. For faith & loue do chiefly excel, & worke in a hidden manner in this moſt bleſſed and excellent Sacrament. God, who is euerlaſting, & of infinite power, doth great and inſcrutable thinges in heauen

and in earth, & there is no ſearching of his wõderfull workes. If the works of God were ſuch, as might be eaſily comprehended by humane reaſon, they were not to be called wonderfull and vnſpeakable.

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FINIS.

THE LIFE OF THOMAS A KEMPIS, CANON REGVLAR DRAWEN OVT OF MANY AVTHOVRS.

THOMAS a Kempis, was borne at Kempis a litle towne in the territories and Dioceſe of Collen, whēce alſo he tooke his name. If you behold his parents with a wordly eye, you will nether diſcouer them of noble bloud,

nor remarkable wealth; for all their nobilitie was pietie; all their reuenues honeſtie of life. They gayned their bread with the labour of their hands, and in the ſweate of their browes, and liued content of the little they had.

God bleſſed their bed with two boyes onely, as far as can be gathered in the diſtance we liue from that age, to witt, Iohn, and Thomas. Iohn the elder brother, haueing finished his ſtudies at Dauentrie: and by the fauour of Gerard the Greate his acquaintance and familiaritie, being inſtructed in all good demeanour; and hauing borne many offices in the order of the Canon Regulars of S. Windeſems congregation, happily departed this life.

Now Thomas of whom we ſpeake, was borne about the

1380. yeare of our Lord God: Vrbane the ſixt holding the keyes, and Charles the fourth wealding the ſcepter of the Empire.

After he had paſt his childhood vnder his parents care; and grew vp to be fitt for learning, he was ſent to Dauentrie, the Metrapolitane citie of Tranſiluania, being as one may gather about 13. yeares old, He was drawen to Dauentrie by the renowne of one Florentius a pious and learned prieſt, and Prefect of the Canon Regulars, whom the frequent troopes of ſtudents which came from thence, had made famous. The ſtudies of Artes and Sciences did ſo florish there at that tyme, that it might be ſtiled the Belgike Athenes.

Being arriued at Dauentrie, his firſt care was to inquire

for his brother, by whose coũ-sel and helpe (for he had but litle or no meanes) he might be directed how to vndertake his studies. And being commẽ-ded to Mr Florentius (for Ge-rard the Great deceased in the yeare 2384. While our Thomas was but yet foure yeares old) he receaued him with all the humanitie possible; prouiding him of lodging, bookes, and liuelihood.

While the youth, who was of a good disposition, and ho-nest couutenance, had meanes by this occasion to be conuer-sant amongst famous men for pietie and learning, who liuing in the companie of Florentius, were adorned with religion, innocencie of life, and since-ritie of demeanour: he was seasoned with their manners, with whose conuersation he

was delighted; being ſtudious at home, aſſiduous at ſchoole; frequent at church. So that in a few yeares ſpace he made ſuch progreſſe in pietie ād learning, as the many bookes, neuer ſufficiently prayſed, written by him, beare teſtimonie. While he liued in the Colledge of the Canon Regulars', whatſoeueri he could gaine by writing (for he was a skillfull pen-man) he putt it all into the common purſe.

He was a great ſeruant of our B. Ladies euen from his childhoode ſaying certaine ſett prayers euery day to her honour. But, as childrens pietie is alwayes mutable and inconſtant, he began to be cold in this pious cuſtome. So that by litle and litle he neglected and deferred his wonted prayers and ſuffrages, firſt to one day;

ſoone after to two or three: then to foure: at length to a whole weeke, and in the end, alas, he gaue ouer all. In the tyme of this his coldnes, he had a viſion by night wherin he conceaued himſelfe to be, as it were, ſtanding in the Hall by his maſter Florentius: where, while with other of his ſchool-fellowes who flocked together to heare the word of God, he attentiuely gaue eare to what was ſaid, the Lady of the world, diſcouered herſelfe vnto him comming downe from heauen in a cloude and diſcending into the ſaid Hall, where being moſt glorious in her gracious aſpect or countenance, and glittering in attire, she cõpaſſed the brothers who preached the word of God to the hearers, and now imbracing one, now another of them, she

ſeemed to render them thãkes, that they endeauoured by wholſome admonition, to effect that the price of her deareſt ſonn's pretious bloud might not perish in thoſe yoũg youthes. But he beholding what paſt: and ſeeing the Virgine bleſſed amongſt women, imbrace the foreſaid brothers, ſtood burning and ſweating; melting and hopeing: and turning, and firmely fixing his eyes bige with loue, vpon her, he ſaid in himſelfe, I will a litle expect that when the bleſſed Virgine shall haue ſufficiently giuen teſtimonies of her loue, to the reſt, she may alſo out of her benignitie daigne me with her charitable imbracements; whom, though I could not honour to her worth, yet I endeauoured it according to my weaknes. But

alas, as the firmeſt hopes of mortalls, are often anſwered with the contrarie; Thomas hoped for a kiſſe, a ſweet pledge of loue, but in lieu ther-of he mett with a ſharpe repre-henſion. For the B. Virgine, hauing ſolaced all thoſe with deare imbracements, who with their pious admonitiõs did ſea-ſon and ripen the florishing ſpring of the multitude of ho-pefull young youthes, she tur-ned at length towardes Tho-mas, and caſting a ſeuere and correcting eye vpon him. In vaine, quoth she, doſt thou ex-pect the imbracement of ſacred loue: cruell enemy! who vnhap-pily neglecting my friendshipe, doſt not pay me the wonted and due reuenneus of thy fer-uent prayers. For where are now thy accuſtomed prayers? Whither are thy daylie deuo-

tions fled? What now become of thy aſpirations mixed with pious ſighes and teares? Is not charitie waxed cold in thee? Loue drowſie? wonted pietie shakē? And yet thou, as though to offend were nothing, ſtādſt audaciouſly expecting imbracements, whoſe actions haue earned wroth. And wrothfully withdrawing her countenāce: begone, quoth she, begone from me: thou art iudged vnworthy of my imbracements, who neglecteſt to pay ſo eaſie a tribute of prayers to thy beloued. And thus leauing him wounded with sharpe reprehēſions, inuironed with clouds she diſappeared.

But Thomas awaking out of his viſion examines his conſcience, acknowledges his fault, and promiſes amendment. And leaſt afterwards he might

be fruſtrated of the B. Virgin's imbracements, he did in ſuch ſort reſume his neglected deuotions, that he did not from that tyme to the verie laſt periode of his life euer omitt thē any more! ô happie reprehenſion, which was forcible to correct errour; to renew the league of loue which was in ſome ſort violated; and to wipe away the ſtayne of negligence.

Being now much improued by ſeauen yeares acquaintance with Mr Florentius and the reſt of the brethere, ād hauing tryed himſelfe in all the parts and points of all the vertues, he was inflamed with a deſire of Religion, the ſparkes or ſeedes wherof Mr Florentius had caſt into his ſoule. Wherfore in the yeare 1400. in which yeare Florentius afterwards dyed, our Thomas betooke himſelfe to

the holy mountaine of S. Anges, ſituated a litle aboue the Citie of swolle, where, vpon the edge of the riuer Vidrun, there was a monaſterie lately begun of Canon Regulars, who liued vnder S. Auguſtins Rule and habit. This houſe was as yet (as the beginnings of all things are wont to be litle and difficult) verie obſcure, being hardly knowen, and rarely frequented by any. When he came thither with commendatorie letres from Florentius, he was verie courteouſly receaued of his owne brother, who was the firſt Priour of the ſaid Monaſterie: and both of them broke out into that heauēly acknowledgment: *how good and pleaſant a thinge it is for brothers to dwell together.*

Now this candidate of religion though he wonderfull fer-

uently

uently desired to enter into it: yet least he might doe any thing too hastily or rashly, he moderated his feruour by a cõsiderate delay, which alone brings forth prudeuce. And therfor after he had spent 6. yeares in the nature of a scholler or prentise, the sixt yeare he receaued the habit, and at the end of the seauenth, he was solemnely professed. He did shine with a meruellous pietie towards God: obedience and obseruãce towards Superiours: loue and good will towards his fellow-brothers. He neuer gaue way to idlenes, the source of all mischiefe: but was continually imployed, ether in reading holy scriptures, transcribing them for the common vse; or in composing somthing of his owne: wherin he did frequently spẽd what rested of the night after

matins, yea euen with damage to his bodily health, to th'end he might oblige all true louers of vertue.

The whole Bible deuided into foure tomes; a mightie faire maſſebooke, and ſundrie of S. Bernards opuſcules, or litle workes, are extant to this day, written by him moſt artificially, and induſtriouſly in an excellent hand.

It is hard to expreſſe how preſent he was to himſelfe, and how reuerently he performed the office of the Church, and all functions therto belonging.

While he ſung the Pſalmes, his aſpect was alwayes turned towatd the heauens. Inſpired with feruent zeale, and taken with the incredible ſweetnes of the Pſalmes he was obſerued to be rauished out of himſelfe in an extaſie, ſo that often-

tymes he did not ſtand on the ground with his heeles, but with his tip-toes onely touched it, ſtriuing to flie into heauen with the reſt of his body, wher he was already in hart and deſire. In ſinging he ſtood alwayes ſtraight vp, without euer leaning, ether with backe, or arme vpon his ſeate.

He was alwayes, day and night, the firſt that entred, and laſt that went out of the Church The worshipe of God, and the comlines of his houſe, did wonderfully delight, and dilate his hart.

So that while vpon a tyme one ſaid merrily vnto him, that he apprehended him happie indeed, and yet not much to be admired, that he ſung the Pſalmes with ſuch alacritie of voice, and promptitude and pietie of mind; ſince Dauids

Pſalmes were as ſauorie to him, as dantie ſamon; It is, thankes be to God, as thou ſayeſt, replyed he, *Pſalmi mihi Salmones*, which yet are tediousād loathſome to thoſe that are not preſent, and attentiue to what they ſing: but ſpare their breaſtes and voices.

All his diſcourſe was of God, and the holy ſcripture. When he chanced to be in the compagnie of graue and learned perſons, who ſpoke of court buſineſſes, and wordly affaires, he ſatt as dum, and ignorant of all the things wherof they treated, not anſwering euen when he was demanded, vnleſſe he were inuited therunto by ſome remarkable and apparent good. Marrie if there were ſpeach of God, and heauenly things, being demanded his opinion, he ſpoke, or rather

wordes flowed from him, as continued brookes ſweetly gliding from a cleare criſtall foũtaine. When he was deſired to preach extemporally, ſo he could diſcouer any ones profit in it, he neuer refuſed; which yet he would not doe, till he had firſt premeditated for a ſmale ſpace, or tooke a short nappe. He had ſuch a facultie in preaching, that verie many moued by the fame therof, flocked to the mount of S. Agnes out of the neighbouring townes and places more remote, with a greedines to heare him.

His companions did not leaſt admire his reſolute ſufferance in ioyfully bearing aduerſities: his patience, not oncly in eaſily tolerating but alſo benignly excuſing other mens faultes. His ſobrietie in all kindes; pu-

ritie of life, and modeſtie; his care and diligence to aduance the profite of the communitie: his earneſt endeuour to ſee the Church beautified and adorned: his burning zeale as well as frequencie in his prayers: his teares plentifully powered out, and other moſt pregnant proofes of ſolide pietie. In fine he had conceaued ſo abſolute ād inward a hatred of all wordly vanities, and allurements; and ſo holy a neglect of all trā-ſitorie things, that he lothed to learne the vſuall names by which they were called.

And leaſt while he preached well to others, his bodv which doth aggrauate the ſoule might haue led him captiue to ſin, and he haue become a reprobate, he chaſtiſed his body and brought it into captiuitie diſciplining himſelf with a [illegible]

certaine dayes in the weeke; ſinging in the interim *ſtetit Ieſus.*

He was ſo wedded to the reading of the holy ſcriptures, and to his celle, that he often both ſpoke and wrote this ſaying. *I haue ſought reſt in all things: yet neuer found it; niſi in angellis & libellis*, that is, in retirednes and reading.

He was ſo affable and milde, that though he deſired much to flie it, yet was he choſen Subprior euen in the flowre of his age, by common ſuffrage. After that he was made Prefect of the economie, or Procurator of the houſe, becauſe he ſeemed to be addicted to almes deedes, with which charge though he diligently complied, yet, becauſe it hindred him from his pious contemplation, and writing of bookes, he was reſtored

to his former office.

It happened oftē that while he conuerſed and diſcourſed amongſt his brethren, he perceaued God manifeſtly ſpeake interiourly to his hart; therfore modeſtly taking an excuſe as though he were expected by ſome, he repaired to his chamber: where powreing out his hart before God, he drunke vp that wiſdome, which all deuoute people admire in his moſt excellent bookes.

Our gracious Lord did alſo honour his feruour with a heauenly viſion: For while he went from the Mount of S. Agnes to viſit Iohn Heuſden Prior, who lay ſicke at Windeſem, ether vpon courteſie, or occaſion; and conſulting with him about ſome buſines appertayning to religion, lodged there that night: He ſaw

in the dawning of the day certaine reſplendant troopes of bleſſed ſpirits running with nimble feete, as though they haſtened to ſome great mans funerall, to conuoy his happie ſoule to their heauenly reſt. The truth which he ſaw, was made good by what he heard: for being wakened by the noyſe of the table he leepes out of bed, and hauing ſome ſenſe of what was to happen, he foretold the death of the Prior of Windeſem.

He learned by experience to deſpiſe the Diuells dreadfulnes and herrour. For when, vpon a certaine tyme, that foule beaſte ſtood about him in a moſt vglie and horred shape. and made towards his bed, he quaked at the firſt approch of that hideous aſpect, not knowing at what defēce to put him-

ſelfe againſt the guile of the dreadfull enemy of mankind. At length encouraged by the holy Ghoſt, he began as well as he could the Angelicall ſalutation, or ave Marie, with a trẽbling voice, as one in feare; But the diuell, as though he had not bene moued at all with that ſalutation, drew neerer and neerer vnto him quaking with feare, till he cryed out *Ieſus Chriſtus Amen*. Whervpon the Diuell hearing that terrible name, ſtruke, as it were with a dreadfull thunder-bolt, turnd away his horrid countenance, and fled away with ſpeed. Thomas therfore obſeruing that the Diuell durſt not ſtand againſt the vertue of ſo powerfull a name, reſumed courrage, rayſed his panting heart, and With iterated cryes proſecuted his flying enemy with the bleſſed

name of *Ieſus Chriſt*. And euer as he redoubled his cryes: the foule fiend redoubled his ſpeed. The bleſſed mā obſeruing this, rendred thankes to God, and ſaid in himſelfe: If by this moſt holy name, *Ieſus*, I be able to breake downe and vanquish the power of darknes, I will no more, as hertofore I haue done, ether feare their machinatiōs, through weaknes of faith, or shake vnder their dreadfull minaces.

Yea thoſe other ſignes and miracles, which in diuers paſſages he relates were done by the payers of a perſon whom he names not: were firmly cōceaued to be done by his owne prayers: as that of the recouering of the booke which was loſt in the celle, and diuers other things.

He was of a litle more then

a midle ſtature : of a manly shape and countenance: of a liuely browne colour: of a sharpe ād ſtrōg ſight, ſo that euē to his graue he neuer vſed ſpectacles.

When he had moſt commendably, and with great fruite to his fellowes, lead a religious life in the Mount of S Agnes for the ſpace of 71. yeares (coūting the fiue yeares which he ſpent there before he was clothed) he was ſummoned by his Lord and Sauiour to the Mount of Eternitie, which he had ſo oft before beheld at diſtance; ſo oft breathed after; and his bleſſed ſoule freed from her earthly priſon, did flit into the eternall tabernacles, there to inioy her God for euer. He dyed the 92. yeare of his age. The 8. of Aug. 1471.

BIBLIOTHECA BODLEIANA

FINIS.